THE TIMES

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Europe seeks new President

Demand for radical reform splits North and South

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS

EUROPEAN leaders embarked on a search for a new European Commission president yesterday after Jacques Santer infuriated many of them by defiantly rejecting the charges of political failure that brought the resignation of the whole Brussels executive.

Compounding the political turmoil raging across the 15-nation bloc, a humiliated Mr Santer claimed angrily that the verdict of incompetence by an external fraud inquiry was a shocking travesty. "This picture is distorted. I consider the tone of the report's conclusions to be wholly unjustified," he said.

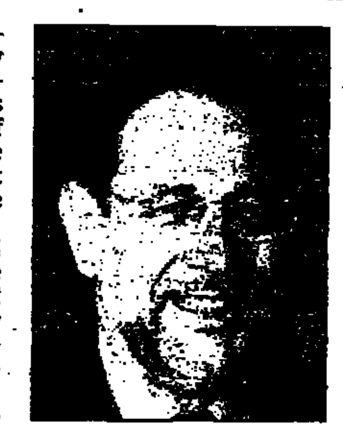
He was matched by an unrepentant Edith Cresson of France, whose misconduct accelerated the Commission's downfall and was pilloried by the inquiry. She insisted that she had no regrets — although French support for her appeared to be evaporating.

But Mr Santer's hopes of clinging to his job were all but destroyed as Gerhard Schröder, the German Chancellor, began sounding leaders on possible successors at the start of a tour of all 15 EU capitals that had already been planned to pave the way for a crucial pact on spending reform in Berlin next week.

And the Commission President's performance brought instant attack from Britain's two commissioners, Sir Leon Brittan and Neil Kinnock. Mr Kinnock was appalled at the way the Commission appeared to think it was "business as usual", his spokeswoman said. Evidence for his view was on display as senior officials tried to ignore the political rubble in their headquarters and played down the crisis as a mere impediment to their business of running the Union's affairs.

Sir Leon accused Mr Santer of carping, saying: "I do not think this is the time to carp and cavil at the content of the report. The time for talking and political controversy is over. What is now needed is comprehensive root and branch reform."

Sir Leon and Mr Kinnock are among a number of outgoing commissioners who were not personally tainted by the fraud report and are likely to be reappointed. But, with Mr Santer pushing hard to stay on as head of a caretaker team, there was a clear geographical divide over the rest of the Commission and its leader. Pressure for rapid change came mainly from northern governments, while Italy, Spain and other southern states indicated that they could accept a caretaker administration.



Javier Solana: joint favourite

This reflected a widespread view in the Mediterranean that the Commission had fallen victim to a self-righteous crusade by northern politicians. Massimo d'Alema, the Italian Prime Minister, said that he was "worried about the Commission's resignation at such an important time for Europe's future." And Ramon de Miguel, Spain's Europe Minister, said that an unnecessary crisis had been triggered by a "lack of solidarity" with the Commission by political groups in the Parliament.

In glaring contrast, the Governments of Denmark, Sweden, Finland and The Netherlands hailed the Commission's rout as a chance to purge a discredited system. Sweden said it would not reappoint Anita Gradin, its Commissioner, who was in charge of fraud investigation in Brussels.

The only outright backing for Mr Santer came from Luxembourg, his home state and the EU's smallest member. "Luxembourg stresses that all the criticisms aimed at Mr Santer, have been shown to be unfounded and erroneous," said Jean-Claude Juncker, the Prime Minister.

The most powerful EU governments now want to use the drama to spur sweeping reform and that means ensuring Mr Santer's rapid departure. While Tony Blair was calling in London for root and branch reform, President Chirac said: "More than ever we must have effective, responsible institutions in Europe, which are close to citizens."

Herr Schröder, whose country's presidency of the EU was in trouble before the Brussels debacle, also favoured appointing a strong leader to steer the Commission to the end of its five-year term in December, but he was determined to prevent the crisis from blocking the Berlin summit, and he did not believe that a new president would be chosen there.

He offered no names for a successor to Mr Santer, but speculation focused on a clutch of leftwing politicians from the Mediterranean states — a region that is deemed to be in turn for the top Brussels seat. The most mentioned candiates are Javier Solana, the Nato Secretary-General, and Romano Prodi, the former Italian Prime Minister.

The process is, however, complicated by EU rules that will prevent the governments from guaranteeing the new president a full five-year term when the Commission comes up for renewal at the New Year. That can come only with a new European Parliament — and the choice of the new president is likely to be subject to the same bitter haggling that has marked the exercise for decades.

Pressure for a swift replacement of the Brussels team also came from the European Parliament, whose rout of the Commission has enshrined it as a formidable new force in EU affairs. José-Maria Gil-Robles, the assembly president, said the Santer team "must leave now and not in nine months' time". And Pauline Green, the British Labour MEP who leads the dominant Socialist block, said: "We have the opportunity to create a better Commission for the next millennium."



REUTERS

Edith Cresson arriving at the European Commission headquarters in Brussels yesterday

Cresson: Je ne regrette rien

BY CHARLES BREMNER AND SUSAN BELL

DEFIANT to the end, Edith Cresson yesterday echoed the words of Edith Piaf when she said: "*Je n'ai pas de regrets.*"

The former French Prime Minister also told France 2 television that she had no need to clear her name since the Commission had been found collectively responsible. "There was misfunctioning like in any administration," she said.

However, Mme Cresson's hauteur will be remembered as the catalyst of the catastrophe. The headline in yesterday's *Libération* said it all: "Cresson sinks the Commission." There was something inevitable in the way that Mme Cresson dragged the Commission into the position where it could be executed by a rampant European Parliament.

Some of her colleagues are now barely on speaking terms with her, believing she could have saved them by sacrificing herself in January. By this week, it was too late.

Blair wants high-flyer appointed quickly

BY PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

TONY BLAIR and Gerhard Schröder called last night for a "political heavyweight" to take over swiftly from Jacques Santer, squashing any attempt by the European Commission President to stay in office.

The Prime Minister said that the unprecedented resignation of the entire Commission executive should be used as the opportunity to push through a root-and-branch reform of Europe's bureaucracy. And he believes that by appointing a "thorough-going reformer" as the new president, the EU may be able to recover from the crisis caused by Monday's damning fraud report.

The German Chancellor, who spent 90 minutes with Mr Blair at Downing Street yesterday, echoed that view, saying Mr Santer's successor had to be highly qualified, with lots of political experience and economic skills.

Next week's special summit in Berlin on the EU budget now seems certain to be dominated by the Brussels convulsions, and Downing Street suggested that EU leaders should make progress towards appointing of a new Commission president by then.

But while Herr Schröder accepted that the presidency would be discussed in Berlin, he did not want the issue to stand in the way of a deal on the future finances of the Community, and he suggested that there might be an informal summit later to decide who should succeed Mr Santer.

Mr Blair is against naming a stop-gap president to serve until December, when Mr Santer was expected to step down, and instead wants someone who will go on to serve a full term. Potential candidates he might support include Romano Prodi, the former Italian Prime Minister, or the Portuguese Prime Minister, Antonio Guterres.

Mr Blair told MPs that the Commission should remain only until a new one was appointed, but he made plain that he would be seeking the reappointment of the two British commissioners, Neil Kinnock and Sir Leon Brittan.

Mr Santer was by no means solely responsible for the situation uncovered by the report, and many of the issues predated his appointment. But, Mr Blair added: "We cannot have the next president decided in the same way as the last, debating the narrow interests of one country or another. The top jobs, not just in the Commission, but throughout the European institutions, should go to the top people. Merit and merit alone should decide."

There should be a "new contract" between the Commission and Europe's heads of government setting a new course of reform and change for the continent.

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Jenny Pitman rides into the Cheltenham sunset

BY SIMON BARNES

JENNY PITMAN, jump racing's eternal female lead, prima donna, pantomime dame and principal boy, yielded to her incurable taste for the theatrical by announcing her retirement on the opening day of the Cheltenham Festival, the biggest occasion in her sport.

She will end a career of extraordinary success — success well-seasoned with controversy and feud — at the end of the season.

Pitman, brought up in farmhouse without running water as part a large family rich only in animals, stormed the male-dominated sport of jump racing.

It would have been a considerable achievement simply to have acquired a trainer's licence in 1975: she went on to become one of the most successful players in the business, training two winners of the Cheltenham Gold Cup and two winners of the Grand National.

John Francome, the former champion jockey, suggested in his autobiography, *Born Lucky*, that trainers at the jump racing's heartland village of Lambourn held a daily shouting competition, judged on volume alone. "But since Jenny Pitman started they have only been competing for second place."

It is unclear whether Francome intends his tribute to Pitman in malice or affection. That is the normal response to Pitman.

She has made scores of enemies with hard words, hot temper and casual rudeness, but she also inspires the most heartfelt devotion. That contradiction is at the heart of Pitman's life-work.

Racing will be quieter without her. She makes Don King, the famously loud-mouthed boxing promoter, seem like a shy, sensitive creature. On the other hand, Pitman is in some ways a shy,sensitive creature herself. She could not have grown so monstrous a carapace of noise and aggression were there not a good deal of softness to protect.Her softness made her superb at looking after horses, her toughness made her superb at judging them.

She is one of those tough, self-reliant people who brings out a heartfelt protective instinct in those closest to her.

Her achievement in starting from nothing to one of the most powerful stables in jumping would be amazing were she an unencumbered male.

Continued on page 3, col 8

LIGHTNING STRIKE

Istabraq — Arabic for "runs like lightning" — won the Smurfit Champion Hurdle at the Cheltenham Festival for the second successive year. Charlie Swann, his jockey, said: "He's brilliant". Page 48

Rats help four infertile fathers

FROM JOHN PHILLIPS IN ROME

FOUR men considered sterile by doctors have fathered healthy babies after their sperm was matured inside rats' testicles, an Italian gynaecologist said yesterday. The experiment was denounced by Italy's Bioethics Committee as "an extreme manipulation" while other experts said that the operation could have "unpredictable genetic consequences".

Dr Severino Antinori, who has helped post-menopausal women to become pregnant, told an international assisted-procreation conference in Venice that three Italians and a Japanese had benefited from the "cure" — developed by him with Professor Nikolaos Sofikitis of Tottori University at Yonago, Japan.

Dr Antinori emphasised that the method circumvented Italian legislation because it did not require an external sperm donor. After three months inside rat tissue the "mature" sperm was used to create an embryo through invitro fertilisation. Couples were hesitant before the procedure, "but it was the only way for them to have a child. Then the children were born and the fear of any kind of deformity was proven to be unfounded".

PUGH

"*Oh look, he's got his father's tail*"

Blair manages to wound even after forgetting his s-word



After lunch yesterday — and before his Commons Statement on the resignation of the European Commission — we can imagine Tony Blair pacing his office floor, wrestling with an intractable problem.

He had his text before him. He was stuck on the second paragraph: "The Committee of Independent Experts, set up last January on a Motion from the Socialist Group in the European Parliament . . ."

Yet again, he took a run at this. "The Committee of Independent Experts, set up last January on a Motion from the So . . . So . . . So . . ." No. He just couldn't get it out. Beads of sweat lined his brow.

He tried again. " ... set up last January on a Motion from the S - S - S - Soc. . ."

A helpful aide intervened. "Try saying it in two halves, Prime Minister. You can surely say 'social' if you change the context. Think 'social occasion'; think Islington dinner party."

Mr Blair tried this. "Social, social. . ." — yes, so long as he kept those mental champagne corks popping, the word was easy.

"Now say 'ist' Prime Minister. Think 'Ist-ambul'."

"Ist," barked Blair.

"Now try the whole phrase, Prime Minister."

". . . set up last January on a motion from the Social . Social. . .Soc. . .S-S-S-*Social*istambul . . .Damn! Can't I just say 'Labour'?"

"But Prime Minister, it isn't the Labour Group of the European Parliament. It includes other countries. They're the Socialist Group."

"Look — hell — y'know — I'm praising these guys. How about 'Third Way Group'?

"Or could I say 'New Labour'?"

"Regrettably, Prime Minister, these terms do not yet exist in the party nomenclature of the Parliament. You'll just have to try to say 'Socialist'. Nobody will blame you personally."

And so it came to pass that Tony Blair sailed into the Commons Chamber shortly before 3.30 clutching his notes, and began his Statement. The first paragraph went fine.

He launched into the second. "The Committee of Independent Experts set up last January on a Motion from the . . ."

Civil servants held their breath . . . ". . . Labour Group of the European Parliament."

Uh-oh. Tories hooted. Bearded Labour lefties bristled. Madam Speaker smiled.

But frankly Blair didn't care. The occasion was going his way. It went his way throughout. Even critics have to admire the way he turned round what had looked like a bad day for Europhiles.

The Eurosceptics had arrived cock-a-hoop. Ho-ho! Not so jaunty now Pierre! Where are all your macaroni airs and graces now, eau-de-cologne-reeking garlic-eaters? Tam Dalyell (Lab, Linlithgow) told Blair that persuading fellow Europeans to confront fraud in their own countries was tough — "not least if they're Italians". MPs gasped and giggled.

But, to Dalyell as to others, Blair transformed Euro-setback into Euro-Brit opportunity. Euro-believers should rejoice, he implied: events were running strongly for reform, and Britain could lead it.

Significantly it was Sir Edward Heath who sounded the most telling alarm: our partners were not easily led, the old man suggested. William Hague decided to present Blair's response as inadequate.

Had he heard Sir Edward he might have thought better and called it pie-in-the-sky.

Responding, Blair mentioned Jacques Santer and, looking straight at Hague, snorted that the Tories were making a habit "of appointing compromise candidates who seem like a good idea at the time".

Ouch. For all who believe that nemesis does not follow hubris, that was a corker.

Inquiry told of hospital records chaos

By Ian Murray, health correspondent

A PICTURE of administrative chaos at a hospital that was supposed to be a centre of excellence began to emerge yesterday, the first day of the marathon public inquiry into the Bristol children's heart operations scandal.

The £15 million inquiry, the longest and most comprehensive to be held within the National Health Service, was ordered by Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, after the General Medical Council hearing into the deaths of 29 of babies at Bristol Royal Infirmary and Bristol Children's Hospital.

The inquiry, in an office block in Bristol, takes over from the point where the GMC left off last June, when it found the heart surgeons James Wisheart and Janardan Dhasmana guilty of serious professional misconduct for carrying on operating on children even though they knew too many were dying. Wishart was struck off; Dhasmana was censured and has since lost his job. The hospital's chief executive, John Roylance, was also struck off the medical register for failing to stop what was going on.

Over the next 18 months the inquiry, which is being chaired by Ian Kennedy, professor of health law, ethics and policy at University College London, will look into more than 2,000 operations on children at the hospitals to try to find out what went wrong and to learn lessons that can be used to improve healthcare throughout the NHS. The operations led to death or brain damage for more than 150 infants.

However, records are so poor that the inquiry still does not know exactly how many operations were performed between 1984 and 1995. Information was stored by a number of methods, and the computer used to collate them was stolen. None of the official logs is complete. Consequently, the inquiry will rely heavily on evidence from parents whose children were operated on.

In his opening address, Brian Langstaff, QC, counsel for the inquiry, said the aim was to get at the truth so that wider lessons could be learnt and recommendations made to improve health care in the NHS.

Getting the facts accurately would be difficult because a number of different systems had been used in different periods for different procedures by different individuals. He said a television documentary in 1987 suggested without any hard evidence that things were going wrong. This had been denied in the programme by Mr Wisheart, using his own figures. "In the past a non-specific allegation backed up by no figures was met by figures which in themselves are controversial," Mr Langstaff said. "Neither approach is good enough for this inquiry."

Almost 29,000 documents have been scanned into the inquiry's database, with half a million pages of clinical evidence.

More than 240 parents parents have sent in completed questionnaires about what happened to their children. Of these, 107 are members of the Bristol Heart Children's Action Group, which represents those campaigning for compensation, and 36 are from the Bristol Surgeons Support Group, which backs the doctors.

GPs and hospitals face inspection

By Helen Rumbelow

TEAMS of inspectors will check standards in every hospital and GP surgery to help to prevent another tragedy such as the Bristol deaths, the Government announced yesterday. The teams will be made up of doctors and others from outside the medical profession, including management and finance experts. They will visit every hospital and family doctor practice at least once every three years, but will also carry out spot-checks if alerted to possible malpractice.

The inspection system, detailed yesterday by Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, will establish the first national watchdog for medical standards. Mr Dobson said the new guidelines would also make hospitals legally responsible for high-quality care. Mr Dobson added: "Frankly I was astonished that there were no standards hospitals were obliged to live up to, nor any mechanism in the NHS to make sure that they did."

At the moment if there is a problem, such as the Bristol heart deaths, there was no clear method of either identifying it or reporting it, he said.

The watchdog, called the Commission for Health Improvement (CHI), is expected to be formed later this year.

Mr Dobson said his aim was not to establish a "blame culture" that would antagonise doctors, "but to spread good practice".

Hospital chief executives will now be held responsible both for the budget of the hospital and the quality of medicine.



Tracey Clarke, whose daughter was born with transposed arteries: "I thought she was going to be in the best hands"

Mother's tearful testimony on daughter's last hours

Parents were thrilled to see blue baby turn pink, but heartbreak awaited them, reports Ian Murray

A MOTHER broke down in tears as she told the inquiry how she learnt that her daughter had died in the arms of a nurse a week after an operation she believed would give her a long and healthy life.

Tracey Clarke insisted on continuing to speak, despite the offer of an adjournment from the inquiry chairman, Ian Kennedy.

Mrs Clarke, 36, said her daughter, Melissa, was born normally in 1990 but began to turn blue because of a heart condition an hour afterwards.

The baby was rushed to hospital in Exeter where a doctor said she had a 50-50 chance of survival. A week later the baby was taken to Bristol Royal Infirmary where a cardiologist told Mrs Clarke that the baby's major arteries were transposed and that a minor operation immediately, followed by a major one in nine months to switch the arteries.

She saw Janardan Dhasmana for the first time the following July when he explained the difficult switch operation needed. "I thought she was going to be in the best hands," Mrs Clarke said.

She was unaware that the surgeon had decided to do a simpler operation to transpose the veins — a procedure requiring further major surgery when the child is about 15. "We didn't read the documents about the operation. We just wanted to hand our child over to them to make her better. When she died, I wished we had asked for the easier operation because I thought she would still be alive. Only later did I discover she had in fact had the easier operation and had still died."

The operation was carried out in October and Mr Dhasmana told the mother all had gone well. "She looked pink and all the blue tinge had gone. There was all the paraphernalia of the intensive care unit sticking out of her, but she looked lovely," Mrs Clarke told the inquiry.

Two days later she arrived with her husband and found the baby surrounded by doctors who said something had gone wrong. Mr Dhasmana told them that the baby still had a 70 per cent chance of survival. Only later did Mrs Clarke learn that mechanical problems had occurred with a ventilator and the baby had not been oxygenated properly for several hours.

A couple of evenings later, she rang the hospital and was told that "everything is going as planned". The following morning the family were summoned urgently to the hospital. "We walked into the intensive care unit to see Melissa, and all the nurses turned their backs on us. The one looking after her disappeared."

They were asked to wait to see Stephen Bolsin, the anaesthetist who went on to alert the Health Department about the hospital's death-rate. They saw him three hours later and he said the baby was brain dead, but he could not turn off the ventilator because it was Mr Dhasmana's day off.

The next day she was told on the phone that the baby had died in a nurse's arms. The Clarkes heard nothing more from Bristol except a condolence card from a nurse. They were contacted six months later by the Exeter hospital and asked why they had not brought the baby for a check-up. The Bristol hospital had failed to notify the local consultant of Melissa's death.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Labour peer calls for Lords rethink

The former Labour leader in the Lords will launch an attack next week on government plans to limit the democratic legitimacy of a reformed second chamber.

Lord Richards, who was sacked last July, will publish a book condemning the Government's favoured option of a largely appointed and indirectly elected Upper House.

In *Unfinished Business: Reforming the House of Lords*, he argues that this would produce a Lords that was neither sufficiently legitimate nor accountable to act as an effective check on the executive.

His own blueprint envisages a mainly directly elected chamber with reduced powers. It would be effective without challenging the supremacy of the Commons, he says.

Bishops oppose pre-nuptial plan

Roman Catholic bishops have accused the Government of undermining marriage by proposing that couples enter into pre-nuptial agreements. In their response to the Government's green paper, *Supporting Families*, they say that such arrangements are a "failure clause" and favour the richer partner. The Right Rev Peter Smith, Bishop of East Anglia, said: "Pre-nuptial agreements imply an expectation of marriage breakdown."

Brutal attack on youth 'was racist'

A black teenager has emerged from a coma after being kicked in the head by three white assailants as he walked home from a fish and chip shop. Police are considering the possibility that the attack on David Virgo, 19, a landscape gardener, in Blackheath, north of Birmingham, was racially motivated. Officers believe that racist comments were made to him before the attack took place on Saturday night.

Manchester tops careers table

Manchester University has knocked Cambridge off top spot in an annual poll of employers' preferred sources of graduates for the first time in a decade. More than 200 large companies contributed to the Signposts to Employability 1999 survey. They rated Manchester top for business and finance courses and also considered its careers service the best in Britain. Sheffield Hallam was the employers' favourite new university.

Straw's £170m crime-fighting plan

By Jill Sherman
chief political correspondent

JACK STRAW announced a three-year, £170 million plan yesterday to tackle high crime rates by extending the use of closed-circuit television and focusing police resources on crime-blighted areas.

The Home Secretary said that part of the money would go towards improving security in the worst housing estates. Local councils and housing associations will be able to bid for cash for projects to reduce social exclusion by improving security in town centres and housing areas.

New CCTV systems will be installed in housing estates, towns, bus and railway stations and particularly car parks, Mr Straw said. About £20 million has been allocated for next year, £60 million for the following year and £70 million in the third year. "In the right context CCTV can significantly reduce crime and disorder," he said.

"It is like having a number of police officers permanently on the beat in particular streets, with eyes in the backs of their heads and an incontrovertible record of what they have seen," he told MPs during a Commons debate. "CCTV can deter criminals, greatly assist the police and others in bringing offenders to justice and to help reduce people's fear of crime."

Mr Straw will announce this week the first 11 areas in which a Government initiative to target policing will be trialled. Next month he will announce the first 60 areas to benefit from a £50 million anti-burglary scheme. **Police stations, page 10**

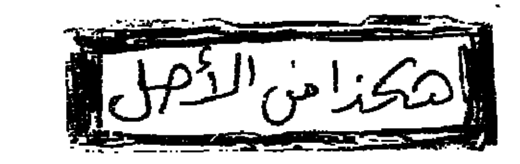
Diana pictures 'justified'

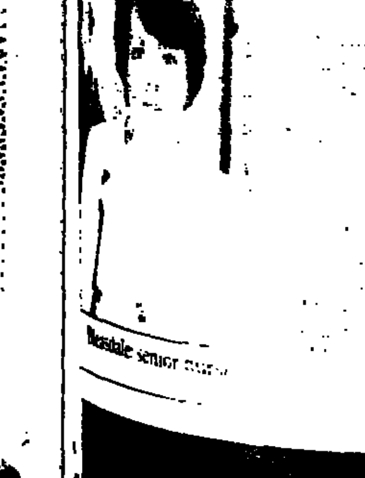
By Michael Harvey

PICTURES of Mohamed Al Fayed's son and Diana, Princess of Wales, were published in the public interest to counter his alleged lies, the High Court ruled yesterday.

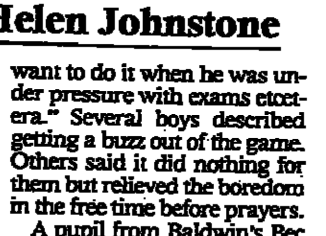
Mr Justice Jacob rejected claims for damages for breach of copyright against *The Sun*, which published the stills taken from a security camera. Mr Al Fayed claimed that his son Dodi and the Princess had visited his house, Villa Windsor, the former Paris home of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, for two hours on the day before they died. He insisted they had looked over the house with the aim of making it their marital home, although the Princess's family has denied that she was to marry.

The stills showed that the couple were in the house for less than 28 minutes. Hyde Park Residence Ltd, which provides security services for Mr Al Fayed, said the pictures from video surveillance were handed to *The Sun* by their former chief security officer Reuben Murrell without their authority. But the judge rejected the company's claim for summary judgment against the newspaper.





Eton boy hanged in fainting game



Inquest told that 15-year-old took search for strangulation 'buzz' too far, reports Helen Johnstone

BOYS at Eton regularly played a "fainting game" that involved two of them tightening a dressing gown cord around the neck of a third, an inquest into the death of a 15-year-old pupil was told yesterday. When the boy being "fainted" stopped tapping his thigh, that was the signal that the desired state of unconsciousness had been reached.

The inquest into the death of Nicholas Taylor was told that he had decided to continue playing the game on his own. He was found on February 22 hanging by a towelling cord from his bedroom door.

A pupil told the hearing, at Windsor, that up to ten boys in Baldwin's Bec House at Eton, the school attended by Princes William and Harry, had tried the game between 70 and 100 times over a two to three-week period before dropping out.

Robert Wilson, the East Berkshire Coroner, said: "I have been sitting in this court for 28 years and I thought I had heard everything. How naive can I be?

"The fainting game, in my language attempted strangulation, taking place between boys who are some of the cream of our society and probably of above average intelligence, why? What words spring to mind? Crazy, mad, stupid? What on earth were they thinking of? What would be the inevitable outcome sooner or later?"

The inquest was told that Nicholas, from Esher in Surrey, had demonstrated his method of self-strangulation to fellow pupils but had never carried it out in front of them. One pupil said Nicholas fainted most nights — the game was played between supper and prayers — sometimes up to three times. He said: "He seemed to want to do it when he was under pressure with exams etcetera." Several boys described getting a buzz out of the game. Others said it did nothing for them but relieved the boredom in the free time before prayers.

A pupil from Baldwin's Bec said that the fainting game had started by chance after Nicholas had "tried to strangle" him last November with a jumper. "We had been fooling around. I fainted and then came round. We told everyone what had happened and people were curious to see if he could do it on purpose."

They had successfully "fainted" another boy and it had gone from there. "After the first night it happened pretty regularly every night with six or seven boys being fainted each evening over two to three weeks."

He did not think there was anything evil in the practice but decided to stop after both his mother and the biology master at Eton said fainting was bad for people.

The pupil who had acted as the guinea pig said he was "fainted" about ten times and helped to do the same to others. "I witnessed faintings between 70 to 100 times over a few weeks." Asked why he did it, he said: "I'm not sure. It was different, not pleasant or unpleasant."



Nicholas Taylor: game started by accident

Asked if it had ever crossed his mind that someone could be strangled, he said: "Yes, slightly but not seriously." He said he did not worry about being caught. He did not believe Robert Topham, Baldwin's Bec House Master, would approve but did not "think he would take a strong line".

The boy said that Nicholas, whose parents, Liz and Malcolm, were at the inquest, had first indicated he would try to "faint" himself by tying his dressing gown cord to the metal door closer after other boys had refused to help him. "If no one was going to do it to him he would do it himself."

Mr Topham told the inquest the fainting game was generally carried out when he was having supper. He accepted that the boys had taken advantage of his absence. He had been "astonished" to find out about it and that he had not heard of the game until Nicholas's death.

Recording a verdict of misadventure, the coroner said it was clear that Nicholas wanted to continue fainting on his own. "He was doing what he intended willingly to do and it went wrong."

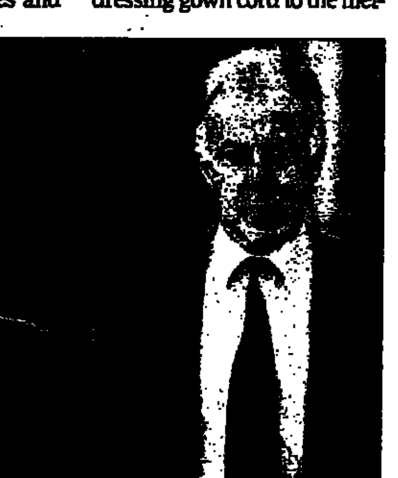
He said he found it difficult to criticise Eton College, whose staff could only do so much to look after the boys in their care. "Yes, they had an absolute duty, they are *in loco parentis*, but there is just so much they can do and no more. They are not prison officers." He could not see how the housemaster or senior prefects could have done more.

In a statement released after the inquest, John Lewis, Eton's Head Master, said Nicholas's death, which was an outright tragedy for the Taylor family, had also touched many people at the college.

"Those who were his friends or closely involved with him or who were caught up in the circumstances of his death have been greatly affected. The chief sympathy of everybody at Eton remains with Mr and Mrs Taylor and Nicholas's sister and brothers."

Mr Lewis said that since it had emerged that eight to ten boys in Baldwin's Bec were involved in induced fainting, House Masters had spoken to their boys in the strongest possible terms about the importance of not doing such things or allowing others to do them.

He emphasised that the coroner had said that he could not see that the House Master or the senior boys could have done more.



Nicholas's parents, Liz and Malcolm Taylor, yesterday

Care that makes houses a home

By John O'Leary, Education Editor

THE pastoral system of care at Eton, based on 24 small houses, has been a feature of the school for generations. The choice of house and housemaster was the crucial factor in the decision to send Prince William and Prince Harry there.

Each of Eton's 1,200 boys has three adults looking after his welfare: a housemaster, a tutor and a dame — the school's term for a matron. Boys are also invited to consult two school doctors, five chaplains and a part-time counsellor.

The centre of school life is the house, where the housemaster and dame have the principal charge of a boy's welfare. Both are readily accessible and visit boys in their rooms in the evening. A senior boy acts as house captain, helping to maintain discipline and keeping the housemaster informed.

An inspection report by the Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference last year described the house system as an "important and impressive feature of Eton". The inspectors said: "Housemasters are immensely caring and knowledgeable about their charges.

"They are people of authority of presence, yet possess a very personal touch without being overbearing."

All boys have their own study bedrooms, providing a degree of privacy unknown in some boarding schools but also making constant supervision impossible. Although there are common rooms, socialising in the evenings often takes place in individuals' rooms.

Eton has had a series of highly publicised drugs cases but the HMC report was complimentary . "This is a civilised community of pupils who respect one another's independence and live together equitably. The overall ethos of the school is such that pupils generally feel secure in school and have confidence that any incidence of bullying is dealt with swiftly and effectively," it said.

The coroner seemed to endorse those findings at the inquest. He concluded that, although it was surprising that the boys should have engaged in such dangerous practices, he could not see that the housemaster or senior boys could have done more. "There is just so much they can do and no more. They are not prison officers."

Eton: was praised for welfare role



CHRIS ISON

Jenny Pitman smiling through the tears as she announces her retirement yesterday

Pitman

Continued from page 1

But she began as a young lone female, parted from her husband, with a young family to bring up.

And she battered down the doors of prejudice by, it seems, sheer volume, and kept them open by sheer talent.

Her strident public persona was necessary at the time. These days, racing people can admire the quiet, classy ways of Venetia Williams, who has become one of the leading trainers over the past season or so. But the door was battered d own for Williams and the other female trainers by the human tidal wave of Pitman.

There is a ham actor in her that loved the attention. She took on herself the role of strident, swaggering harridan, thigh-slapping her way across Lambourn full of pithy lines and salty words.

After the disaster of the Grand National false start, she summed up the occasion to perfection by calling the failed starting gate "sixty yards of knicker elastic".

She announced that if she got hold of a journalist who made an incorrect prediction "*there is every chance of him* being castrated". he journo's crime was an incorrect prediction about one of her especially deeply beloved horses — and Pitman has only ever had two kinds of horse, deeply beloved and especially deeply beloved.

She survived a bout of cancer in recent months: but that, it seemed, had done nothing to dampen her fires of aggression, of love. She is a person who has always needed friends and family to love, and enemies to take on.

Smoker's widow wins payout for cancelled heart surgery

THE widow of a man denied a heart bypass operation because he smoked five cigarettes a day has been given £40,000 in compensation.

John Gibson, 59, died of a heart attack ten months after the last-minute cancellation of a triple-bypass operation at Southampton General Hospital, Hampshire. As he was being prepared for surgery, his surgeon had asked him whether he had given up smoking. When Mr Gibson replied "No" the doctor sent him home and told him that he could rejoin the NHS waiting list once he gave up.

Mr Gibson went on the waiting list at a different NHS hospital, but was unable to undergo the surgery before he died in November 1993.

His wife, Andrea, issued a writ against the Southampton and South West District Health Authority. The authority has agreed to an out-of-court settlement, but maintains that while Mr Gibson continued to smoke doctors considered that the risks of operating on him were too high.

Mrs Gibson said: "It was a devastating blow when he was turned down for the surgery and John was never the same again. When he died I lost everything — my husband and then my house.I am relieved that at last this whole unpleasant affair is over."

Mr Gibson had a history of health problems. He had smoked 20 cigarettes a day, but cut down to five when told he needed the operation.

Mrs Gibson, of Alton, Hampshire, said: "He was so nervous about the operation and was very determined to give up so he wouldn't be put in the same situation again.

"I don't think he could believe [the operation] had stopped at the last minute and I don't think he could face going through it all again."

"He went back on the waiting list at the Royal Brampton Hospital in London where he had more tests in June but died in the November."

Mr Gibson, an independent car trader who ran a letting agency with his wife, had previously always gone to a private hospital.

"He could have had the operation a week after the first tests for £11,000 but at the time we couldn't afford it and so went on the NHS." Mrs Gibson said. "The one time that he relied on the NHS he was let down abysmally."

The settlement with the health authority was reached without any acceptance of liability. A spokesman said: "The trust rejects allegations that this patient was refused treatment. His operation was deferred until he gave up smoking because the risks of operating while he continued to smoke were considered too high by the doctors.

"The decision ... was backed by the British Medical Association."

Simon Clark, a spokesman for the smokers' group FOREST, said: "Smokers are entitled to the same care and compassion as non-smokers. We can only hope that this case emphasises the considerable financial penalties which hospitals may face if they fail to treat smokers equally."

Andrea and John Gibson, who was refused a bypass

Senior nurse rejected doctor's 'suggestion of euthanasia'

Acting matron left job after confrontation, reports Michael Horsnell



Bleasdale: senior nurse

A NURSE yesterday described her horror when a doctor in charge of an elderly patient had allegedly suggested euthanasia.

June Bleasdale, senior nurse at a nursing home, told the professional conduct committee of the General Medical Council that Ken Taylor had ordered her to stop the woman's food supplement and curtail her fluid intake. She made clear she would refuse. *Mary Ormerod*, 85, *who had* suffered several strokes, was taken off the supplement Fresubin on June 29, 1995, and died 58 days later at Oxford House, Preston, weighing 3st 12lb.

Mrs Bleasdale, who was deputising as matron, said that Dr Taylor had asked her to accompany him to the room where the bedridden Mrs Ormerod was lying. He told her he had been approached by two of her daughters and then outlined his instructions while averting his gaze from the worried nurse.

She told the hearing: "He said he had been approached by two people. They were members of the family. He said they were both very distressed at their mother's ongoing situation ... that they were struggling with the fact that her condition was not getting any worse and they had discussed it. He said he wanted Fresubin stopped and her fluid regime to be curtailed from 200mls every two hours to between 20 and 50mls."

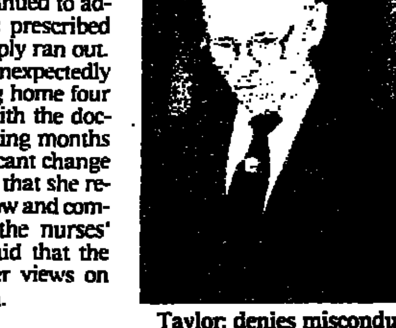
Mrs Bleasdale protested that the weather was "scorching" and that a reduction in fluid would soon cause dehydration in anybody. "I was horrified. I expressed my horror. I asked him to clarify exactly what he had said. He clarified it and he added that it was the 'quantity versus quality of life' in question. After he had repeated his instructions I asked if what he was saying was in fact euthanasia and, if so, what he was saying was illegal. His next comment — I thought it was grotesque. He said, 'it's not as if she is going to do much'."

Mrs Bleasdale said she asked the doctor to accompany her to the office and made clear she would play no part in carrying out his instructions. "I emphatically said I will make no change in my own approach and that if he wished to make any written changes he should accompany me to the office and write in her care plan that I would not be a party to it."

Dr Taylor, 51, denies serious professional misconduct for allegedly ordering staff at the home to starve the patient and let her "slip away". Some staff defied him and continued to administer Mrs Ormerod's prescribed supplement until the supply ran out.

Mrs Bleasdale, who unexpectedly left her job at the nursing home four days after the meeting with the doctor, said that over preceding months there had been no significant change in the patient's condition, that she retained her ability to swallow and communicate by squeezing the nurses' hands. Mrs Bleasdale said that the doctor had not asked her views on Mrs Ormerod's condition.

The case continues.



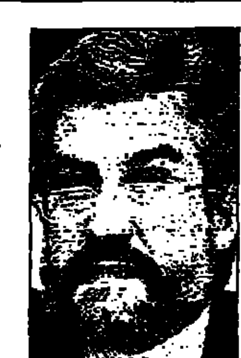
Taylor: denies misconduct

COMMISSION IN CRISIS



Jacques Santer
President of the Commission
Luxembourg

Accused of setting up an off-shore company to dismantle North Sea oil platform with EU funding. Report said allegations were unfounded but accused his administration of mismanagement.



Manuel Marín
Mediterranean, Near and Middle East
Spain

Accused of nepotism by appointing his wife to a Commission post. Report found "no irregularity".



Martin Bangemann
Industrial Affairs
Germany

Untainted. Known for his lavish lifestyle and long lunches. He does not wish to be re-nominated, and is looking forward to his retirement.



Sir Leon Brittan
External Relations
Britain

Untainted.
Response: Sir Leon said the report was "a disaster" which will "require speed and ruthless determination to deal with."



Karel Van Miert
Competition Policy
Belgium

Untainted.
Response: denounced the report as unfair.

Santer fails to comprehend his disgrace

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS

THE COMMISSION

IN A fit of red-faced pique, Jacques Santer offered yesterday a glimpse of the psychic chasm that lies between the new management style desired by the European Union's reformers and the cosy old ways that sealed the downfall of the Brussels executive.

While Britain and other governments hailed what they saw as a healthy purge and the European Parliament basked in its role as democratic scourge, the genial President of the European Commission could not comprehend his political disgrace. "I am offended," he said. It was outrageous that the Commission had been accused by the independent inquiry of general irresponsibility, the most devastating charge levelled at his team on Monday. "This conclusion was perfectly unjustified."

The affair, he insisted, was the fault of the media which had "harassed" the Commission; it was, he suggested, the fault of unnamed enemies who had had a hand in drafting a wide condemnation that bore no relation to the meagre sins identified among his 19 Commissioners. That amounted, he said, to only one confirmed case of cronyism.

Mr Santer also pointed the finger straight at Jacques Delors, the French socialist whom he succeeded as President in 1995. Four of the six main cases of abuse identified had their origins in the Delors regime, he said. Mr Santer said the crisis should trigger reform, but he had personally been cleared and was ready to carry on as President.

In Parliament, down the hill from the Commission's headquarters, Alan Donnelly, leader of the British Labour group, said: "He is obviously in denial." Mr Santer's performance drew embarrassed laughter from career officials in the 17,000-strong institution. However, some EU civil servants share his view that the Commission is victim of an "Anglo-Saxon political crusade".

A clash of European cultural tradition between north and south is visible in the struggle. Edith Cresson, the most disgraced Commissioner, deplored the way the Germans had joined the northerners in a Protestant crusade against the southern culture of state administration.

Mme Cresson has a point because it was Edward McMillan-Scott, now the Tory leader in the Parliament, who had opened the first fraud offensive eight years ago. The pressure for reform rose with a northward shift when Sweden and Finland joined in 1995.

The north-south differences were visible yesterday. Sauli Niinisto, the Finnish Finance Minister, hailed the mass resignation as "good news". Pierre Schori, a leading member of the Swedish Government said: "What we have now is EU parliamentarism." Neil Kinnock, one of the British Commissioners, said the crisis "was a watershed and will ensure reform".

On the other side, Greece said it wanted the Santer team to stay on. Madrid regretted the unnecessary creation of an "institutional vacuum".

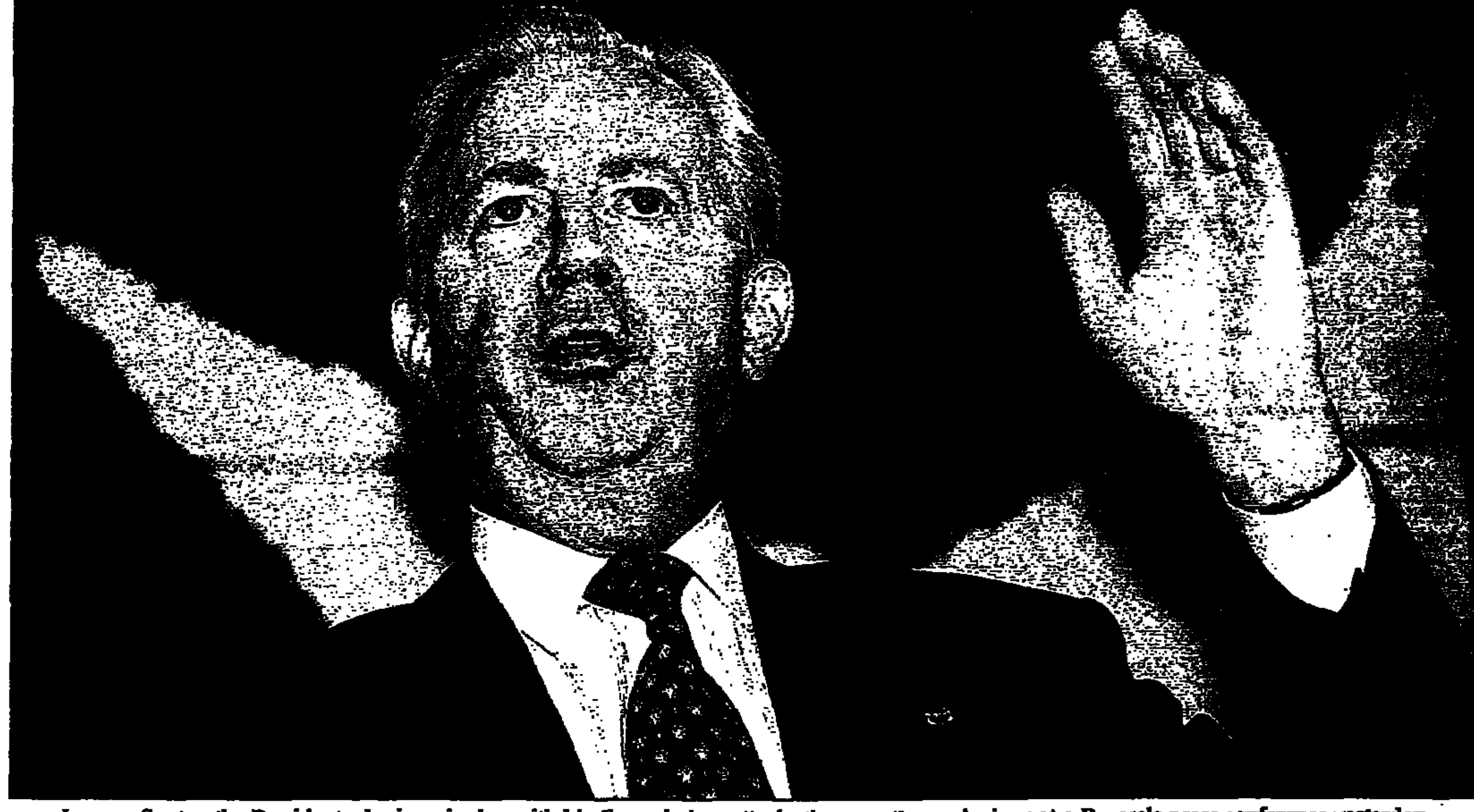
Taking a longer view, seasoned Brussels hands see the battle over the Commission as the consolidation of a shift in EU power to the Council of Ministers and Parliament. After a heady decade of empire-building under M Delors, the would-be unelected government of Europe had been brought well under the wing of the national governments.

Simon Jenkins: page 20
Leading article and Letters, page 21

LINKS

http://europa.eu.int/comm/index_en.htm — The European Commission
http://europa.eu.int/comm/commissioners/index_en.htm — Profiles of the 20 Commissioners
http://www.europa.eu.int/geninfo/whatsnew.htm — Statement by Jacques Santer
http://www.europarl.eu.int/experts/ — The Committee of Independent Experts' report on fraud

DANIEL WILLAN/ EPA



Jacques Santer, the President who is resigning with his Commission, attacks the report's conclusions at a Brussels press conference yesterday

All-day fight fails to defeat the wolves

BY CHARLES BREMNER

AS THE dust settled yesterday from the collective exit of the Brussels executive, it emerged that Jacques Santer and his team had hoped until late on Monday night to stave off the fate of mass resignation.

The mood in the Commission was one of relative relief early that day after independent auditors had allowed individual Commissioners to read the sections dealing with their cases. The report found that none had been personally dishonest or had benefited from fraud.

Mr Santer had hoped to tough out the storm, casting one or two Commissioners to Parliament's wolves. In the early evening that hope turned to crisis as the full report was turned over, with its devastating conclusions on the Commission's wholesale failure of leadership.

In a first round of meetings, some Commissioners argued for a mass exit as the only solution. Among those were Yves-Thibault de Silguy and Edith Cresson, the Commissioner held most personally responsible for wrongdoing. Mme Cresson insisted that there was no case for her to stand down alone, as suggested widely, Commission sources said. "She acted as if she was no more involved than anyone," said a source.

However, the Commissioners reviewed several options, notably a suggestion from Sir Leon Brittan, the senior British Commissioner, for a selective cull that would remove Mr Santer and Mme Cresson, according to sources. Parliament's main political groups were calling for the same.

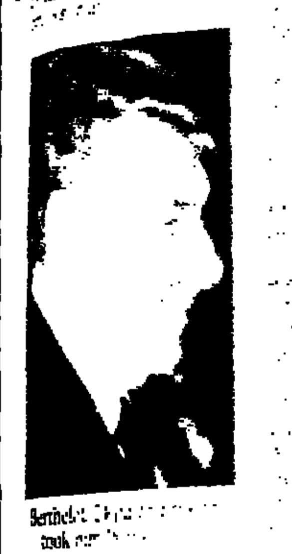
Ritt Bjerregaard, the combative Danish Commissioner, was on his own in seeking a mass fight against any resignations.

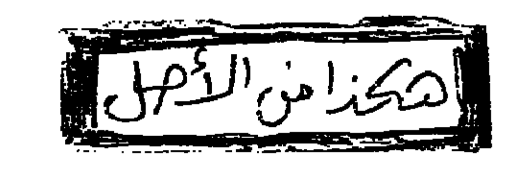
However, as the evening wore on, Parliament's dominant Socialist group heard that the French Government was backing Mme Cresson.

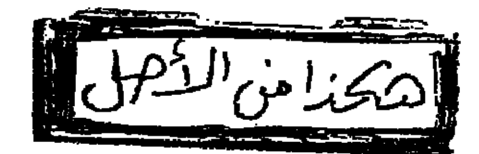
That prompted Pauline Green, the Socialist leader, to harden the parliamentary line, demanding the wholesale departure of the Commission.

Word of that demand amounted to a *coup de grace* for Mr Santer's team. Gathered in full session at 10.20pm, Commissioner after Commissioner took the floor, calling for a wholesale resignation.

Sir Leon described the situation yesterday as "a disaster" that requires speed and ruthless determination to deal with".









Hans van den Broek
Former Soviet Union, East and C. Europe
The Netherlands

Untainted.
His department has, however, been the subject of widespread criticism over misspent aid to Eastern and Central Europe.



João de Deus Pinheiro
Africa, Caribbean and Pacific
Portugal

Accused of nepotism.
The report concluded: "It would have been prudent if he had not appointed his own brother-in-law."



Padraig Flynn
Employment and Social Affairs
Ireland

Untainted.
Mr Flynn has, however, been seriously damaged by revelations that he accepted cash contributions for his party's elections campaigns.



Marcelino Oreja
Institutional Affairs
Spain

Untainted.
Once described as the prototype of a "super-annuated commissioner."



Anita Gradin
Immigration and Judicial Affairs
Sweden

Untainted.
Response: "We have to accept, even myself, some of the criticism.
But it's a bit ironic that we were the first Commission to try to clean things up."

Cresson is damned over dentist crony

By Charles Bremner and Susan Bell

EDITH CRESSON is the only Commissioner accused of nepotism — for having employed her long-standing dentist friend, Dr René Berthelot, in a fictitious post on a contract investigators called "manifestly irregular".

Charges against the Commission went far beyond Mme Cresson's fondness for appointing friends to important jobs and her indifference to abuses by subordinates, but it was her refusal to accept any blame before Parliament's inquisitors that set in motion the events that led to the independent auditors' devastating report. For many MEPs, the high-handed manner of the late President Mitterrand's one-time favourite symbolised all the sins that they saw in the Commission's culture of unaccountability.

Monday's report vindicated that view, damning her not only over her dentist friend, but also for, in effect, lying to Parliament and President Santer over an emerging scandal in the training administration she headed.

The majority of missions the dentist undertook on Mme Cresson's instructions were to Chatellerault, where the French Commissioner was Mayor until 1997, leading investigators to conclude that they could be considered "proof of the fictitious nature of his tasks". Out of 17 business trips, 13 were to Mme Cresson's fief, where he spent at least 41 days in the town at EC expense. The investigators' found that he had barely 24 pages to show for 18 months' work, during which time he was paid Fr390,000 (about £39,000).

His meagre documentation, described in the report as "vague", never revealed properly the reason for his visits. In a letter to Dr Berthelot on July 26, 1995, offering him a six-month contract with the Commission as a "scientific adviser", no specific mission was mentioned, despite EC instructions to the contrary. The letter refers to his "spontaneous application" for the post, despite his having been employed at Mme Cresson's request. His contract was extended until August 31, 1996 and again until February 28, 1997. When asked about his role by Parliament budget inspectors last October, Mme Cressson said: "As a politician, it seemed absolutely legitimate to call on external advisers, some of whom I know well."

As an exercise in self-destruction, the blunt-spoken socialist, could hardly have done better than blame all her troubles on "a German-inspired bid to damage France". In a belated attempt to deploy her uncontested charm with politicians and journalists, she sat in her Brussels flat recently, elegant in a silk trouser suit, and confided astonishment over "a mysterious and murky plot" to do her down.

Mme Cresson became France's first woman Prime Minister in May 1991 — and during a stormy ten months held the dubious distinction of being the most unpopular of the Fifth Republic.

There was speculation that M Mitterrand's relationship with the fiery redhead went beyond mere friendship. When he ditched her in 1992, she blamed a "macho plot".





Berthelot: 24-page report took him 18 months



Cresson: said that attacks on her were part of a "murky" German-inspired plot to damage France

Gravy train trundles on

By Charles Bremner

THE Commissioners now leaving Brussels may have lost political face, but they can probably count on comfortable retirements, thanks to the lavish traditions of Brussels.

Although service for a full five-year term is normally required to qualify for full pension rights, it is thought that the outgoing team will enjoy most of the usual benefits. Under staff rules, a departing Commissioner gets 22.5 per cent of final salary for life, which amounts to nearly £30,000 a year.

Commissioners are also eligible to receive half their £125,000 basic salary for three years, to enable them to readjust to normal life. On top of that they get allowances of up to £6,000 a year to cover their families. The total for the golden handshake, if paid in full, would amount to about £300,000 per Commissioner for the period of the next three years.

RETIREMENT DEALS

This gravy train of golden handshakes and life-long gold-plated pensions is likely to come to a halt under staff reforms that will emerge from the onslaught from the Parliament and member states.

The most scandalous abuse has been the provision that allows senior Commission officials to enjoy high proportions of their salary even when forced to resign in disgrace. Under an article of the existing staff regulations Commission staff can be forced to take early retirement but are still guaranteed incomes may be considered lavish.

- **Javier Solana:** Spanish former Foreign Minister is favourite. Fits widely held belief that the job should go to a socialist from a southern European state.
- **Romano Prodi:** Italian former Prime Minister admired for enforcing rigour required to enable Italy to qualify for euro membership. But as a centrist politician he may not be socialist enough.
- **Antonio Guterres:** Said to be one of Tony Blair's favourites, the Portuguese Prime Minister is an exponent of the New Labour-style "third way". He says he does not want the job.
- **Giuliano Amato:** Italian former Prime Minister. Hampered by ties with Bettino Craxi, the exiled socialist leader wanted by the police.
- **Felipe González:** Spanish socialist former Prime Minister is tainted by scandals over anti-terrorist death squads.
- **Wim Kok:** Dutch Prime Minister says he does not want the job. But his candidature may please Germany. Dutch economy has emerged as a healthy left-wing model, with low unemployment.



Edith Cresson
Science and Research
France

Accused of nepotism. Report found that the appointment of her dentist friend to a Commission post was a clear-cut case of favouritism. Response: "I have no regrets."



Ritt Bjerregaard
Environment
Denmark

Untainted. Disliked for criticising colleagues. Seen as bad appointment



Monika Wulf-Mathies
Regional policy
Germany

Accused of nepotism. Report found that the appointment of a friend to a Commission post "bordered on inappropriate procedure". A former trade unionist and unlikely to be renominated.



Neil Kinnock
Transport
Britain

Untainted. Response: "By doing what we did last night we made a clean break. It will lead to firmer management."



Mario Monti
Internal Market
Italy

A respected economist who has advocated streamlining welfare and subsidies.

Sober North beats EU's siesta South

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

WHEN Gerhard Schröder, whose presidency of the European Union looks pretty much out of control, held talks with Tony Blair in London last night, they naturally discussed a Third Way manifesto which is supposed to set out a modernising brief for Europe.

Mineral water was drunk. As in Herr Schröder's trip to Denmark, Sweden and Finland, a sober time was had by all, for the Protestant North is celebrating a moral (though probably pyrrhic) victory over the Catholic South.

The collapse of the European Commission represents — if one is to believe the Germans and the Swedes and the Dutch — a triumph of Sierra focus group social democracy over siesta socialism.

There is a grander way of explaining events in Europe. Carolingian Europe, represented by the likes of Jacques Delors, Helmut Kohl and François Mitterrand, is giving way to a Europe more concerned with good housekeeping than compelling vision.

The old joke about a visitor gazing up at the Berleymont building and asking: "Who works there?" — answer: "about 20 per cent of the inhabitants" — probably had a 9th-century equivalent.

Now that Protestant bean-counting prime ministers have replaced Catholic leaders, the Franco-German Rhineland axis has never looked weaker and the rich are wondering why, in the absence of a big European idea, they should be paying for the South when their real strategic interests seem to lie in the East.

From the beginning the European Union was something like an extended Sicilian family. Its social dynamic was built on favours, horse-trading and a steady flow of cash. The family survives because it shares its prosperity and is always ready to expand. The stronger members of the family protect the imbecile child or the unmarriable daughter.

The critical figure in the hierarchy is the mother, a conciliator who feeds, arbitrates, redistributes and keeps a rough emotional balance in the family. In Europe-as-family the Commission played the role of mama, the great dispenser of favours. Plainly the south Europeans saw little wrong with the Commission that created networks of allegiance; a Commission post was the lucrative reward for wrong-footed politicians and their primary job on arriving in Brussels was to hand out lucre to friends and allies. The divide, however, is crumbling, as is the family metaphor.

In Germany everyday culture has become closer to the old Club Med clichés. Trains never run on time, craftsmen are sloppy, the delivery schedule for a new bed is typically five weeks with no certainty as to when the furniture will arrive on the doorstep.

Bribes and backhanders have become part of the civic culture.

The price of a driving licence in Frankfurt, according to an investigation, is a 1,000 mark (£333) bribe for a motorbike licence and 2,000 marks for a lorry licence. In Berlin, Frankfurt or Munich one can jump the queue for a council flat with a bribe of 6,000 marks.

Tony Blair comes to Aachen in May to pick up the Charlemagne prize for European statesmanship. He might care to reflect on the rotten state of the Union.

THIERRY CHARLIER / AP



Spring blossom among the national flags outside the European Parliament building in Brussels yesterday

Shake-up in Europe was 'absolutely right'

☐ Britain: Tony Blair told MPs at Westminster it was "absolutely right" for the Commission to have resigned *en masse* after the report revealed a "sad catalogue of negligence and mismanagement". Ministers want to reappoint the two British Commissioners, Sir Leon Brittan and Neil Kinnock.

☐ Germany: Bonn, desperate to keep a grip on its flagging presidency of the European Union, is urging its partners to keep the present Commission in place until after June's elections to the European Parliament. It fears that the Berlin summit on March 24 to overhaul Europe's finances will be derailed.

☐ France: Press reaction focused on the downfall of Edith Cresson — "Shameful Cresson" said *France-Soir*.

☐ Ireland The collapse of the EU Commission provides the Irish Government with a perfect excuse for removing Padraig Flynn from office. Mr Flynn, the former EU Social Affairs Commissioner, is a source of embarrassment as he faces allegations of receiving £50,000 in secret payments from a builder.

☐ Italy: Commentators combined relief that the two Italian EU Commissioners had been "absolved" of fraud, nepotism and corruption with anxiety over the future fate of European integration.

☐ Spain: The official Spanish response was muted, principally because the Foreign Minister, Abel Matutes, was singled out for criticism for his period as a commisioner. Manuel Marin, the Spanish vice-president of the Commission, was deemed to have been cleared of allegations of nepotism and failing to deal with corruption, although his wife remains a member of his staff.

☐ Portugal: The Governmenthas said that João de Deus Pinheiro, in charge of relations with Africa and the Caribbean, will go when the new Commission is announced. Senhor Deus Pinheiro has employed his wife and his brother-in-law at the Commission.

☐ Finland: The Prime Minister, Paavo Lipponen, whose country assumes the EU presidency in July, welcomed the resignation of the Commission members.

☐ Sweden: The Prime Minister, Goeran Persson, said the resignation "clears the air ... transparency has arrived in the EU to stay".

☐ Denmark: The Foreign Minister, Niels Helveg Petersen, said: "The Commission has a clear responsibility for some of the irregularities that have taken place. The Commission had no other choice but to resign."

☐ Belgium: The Commission was widely praised for its decision to resign, but there was widespread resentment over the way that it had been forced out by the sins of individual Commissioners.☐ Denmark: The Prime Minster, Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, said that the Commission had made the right decision by resigning.

☐ Luxembourg: Officials depicted Mr Santer as a scapegoat. An honest man had fallen victim to a power struggle between the Commission and the Parliament.

THE CONSTITUTION

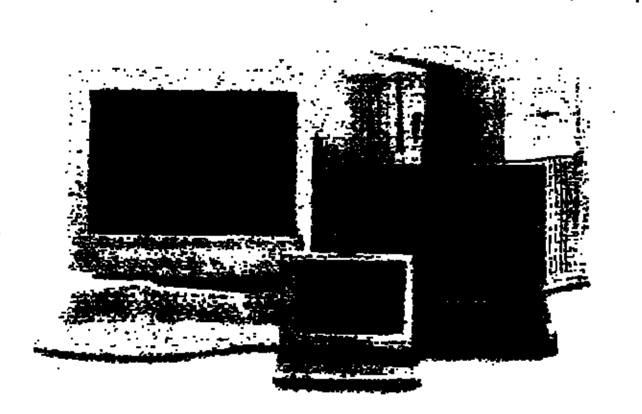
Legal experts in Brussels and European Union capitals insist that nothing in the treaties of Rome, Maastricht or Amsterdam precludes the reappointment of some or all of the Commissioners who resigned on Monday (Michael Binyon writes).

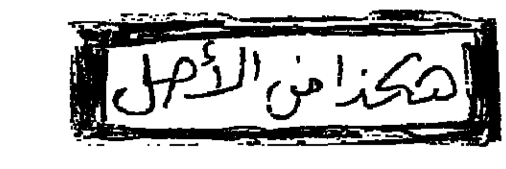
Their contention will be fiercely resisted, however, by MEPs and others calling for a clearout of the entire Commission. They argue that the governing treaties make it absolutely clear that none of the Commissioners can be reinstated even as caretakers, and that an entirely new Commission must be chosen. The argument turns on which article in the Treaty of Rome and its amendments is chosen.

Foreign Office officials said the present situation was "uncharted territory". But in recent weeks as the possibility of resignations drew closer, legal experts have been looking at how the EU machinery can legally be kept going.

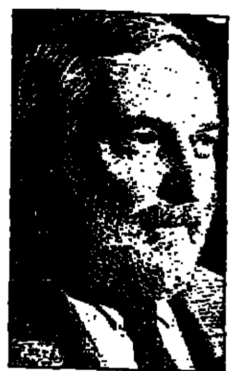








COMMISSION IN CRISIS



Franz Fischler
Agriculture
Austria

Untainted by the scandal.
Response: agreed to the mass resignation out of solidarity with fellow Commisioners.



Emma Bonino
Consumer affairs and humanitarian aid
Italy

Untainted.
Response: she described the mass resignation as a "political gesture," and the commissioners as "martyrs" in the European cause.



Yves-Thibault de Silguy
Economic affairs
France

Untainted.
A graduate of France's elite administrative university, Ecole Nationale Administration, he has the traditional haughty bearing of the French political elite.



Erkki Liikanen
Budget
Finland

Accused of abusing his position to secure EU contracts for his wife. Report found the allegations "were unfounded".



Christos Papoutsis
Energy
Greece

Untainted.
Little known outside Greece, he hopes to use his commission job as a stepping stone to the more coveted prize of Greek Prime Minister.

Blair says merit must decide who gets the top jobs

BY ROLAND WATSON
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

TONY BLAIR last night proposed sweeping changes to the personnel, management and culture of the European Commission as he used the power vacuum in Brussels to press the case for reform.

The Prime Minister handed his plans to Gerhard Schrö der, the German Chancellor, in Downing Street last night in the hope that they would be tabled for debate at next week's Berlin summit. Downing Street and Foreign Office staff have been working on the proposals for some months, but seized their moment yesterday after the mass resignation of the 20 European commissioners on Monday night.

In a Commons statement, Mr Blair told MPs the proposals were designed to deal with the "systemic failings in the commission" which he said had been tolerated for too long. His officials stressed that reform, and speedy reform at that, was critical to repairing the credibility of the commission. The Prime Minister's official spokesman compared the Brussels bureaucracy to "Lambeth council in the 1980s".

Mr Blair himself highlighted the way senior officials were appointed as one of the key areas. "The top jobs should go to the top people," Mr Blair told the Commons. "Merit and merit alone should decide." His comments were aimed at the quota system which tries to share senior posts around the 15 member states.

At the two top levels, the 229 posts are shared out roughly according to population. Britain has seven grade A1 officials and 23 at grade A2, the same as Germany, whereas Greece has two and six respectively and Finland has one and five. At other levels the quota system is less rigid, but remains semi-official.

In contrast, the British proposals stress the need for transparency at all levels, and appointment based on a proven ability to do the job.

As part of a "new contract" between the commission and the Council of Ministers, the paper includes proposals to make director-generals, the senior civil servants who head each of the commission's departments, much more closely accountable for their department's record.

The report which sparked the mass resignation of commissioners highlighted the lack of responsibility among officials for either their budget or the effect of their department's measures. The British paper suggests that Brussels adopts a relationship between officials and the Council of Ministers similar to that in the UK where Whitehall permanent secretaries are accountable to Parliament.

The British plan would also slim down the Brussels bureaucracy, particularly at senior level, over a number of years. Mr Blair told MPs: "There will, no doubt, be those who see this as just another chance to bash Europe. Intelligently seen, this is in fact an oportunity to make changes which many of us believe and have argued are long overdue.

Simon Jenkins, page 20
Leading article, page 21

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- All senior appointments to be made on merit, and not according to the semi-official quota system which seeks to ensure that all 15 countries are fairly represented.
- Top civil servants to be directly accountable for the performance of their departments.
- An independent fraud office with full powers of investigation.
- Stricter guidelines on the awarding of outside contracts.
- Stricter employment contracts, making it easier to move or dismiss under-performing officials.
- A complete overhaul of the approval and auditing of the commission, coupled with a new system for financial management and spending programmes.



JOHNNY EGGITT/EPA

Tony Blair and Gerhard Schröder outside 10 Downing Street yesterday, where the two leaders met for talks

Inherent flaws may prevent reform

Peter RIDDELL ON POLITICS

Tony Blair talked tough over the European Commission. That was both right in itself and politically necessary. Far-reaching changes are required both in the leadership of the commission and its structure. But can Mr Blair deliver?

In the past, the commission has brushed aside charges of fraud and mismanagement. Responsibility has been evaded, the sums involved have been dismissed as trivial and blame has been shifted to member countries.

Unusually for a European document, the latest report is clearly written and blunt. The indictment against Edith Cresson for favouritism and for failing to act in response to "known serious and continuing irregularities" is damning. Jacques Santer's errors were of omission rather than commission. But he is criticised for neglect and his attempt to shrug off responsibility was pathetic.

The new President must, in Mr Blair's words, be "a political heavyweight". The European leaders may appoint a high-quality replacement this time in response to the crisis.

However, the system of appointing commissioners is inherently flawed. As long as nominations of commissioners are made by member states and the allocation of portfolios, including the President, results from haggling among heads of government, merit will come a distant second to domestic political factors. Who has to be rewarded, fobbed off, etc? Mr Blair has rejected any change in the system of nomination.

The Prime Minister made a number of sensible and overdue suggestions about improving methods of financial control and management. Some can be implemented quickly without treaty changes.

Reform of multinational organisations is, however, never straightforward, as has been shown at the UN in New York and its various agencies. Appointments and promotions are fixed in relation to national quotas, to ensure that states, particularly smaller ones, have a "fair" share. That works against giving "the top jobs to the top people". In a perverse way, the European Commission, like the UN, represents a careful balancing of various national interests rather than the nucleus of a European super-state where national identities do not matter. Changing the culture will be hard since any criticism of a senior official can be presented as an attack on any member country.

Mr Blair argued that this time his call for reform had echoes across Europe. It may have in the short term. But the latest upheavals — and Mr Blair's response — have raised the stakes. Reform of the commission has now become a crucial part of the Government's campaign to convince the British public of the advantages of Europe ahead of the referendum on the euro.

Hague seeks new code of conduct

COMMONS DEBATE

BY JAMES LANDALE
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

WILLIAM HAGUE demanded a binding code of conduct for the appointment of senior officials within the commission yesterday.

Replying to Tony Blair's statement in the Commons, the Tory leader welcomed the Prime Minister's proposals but said: "Will you consider adding to your list a binding code of conduct to prevent personal appointments of commissioners and to stamp out nepotism, and an agreement that the Parliament should be allowed to sack individual commissioners guilty of misconduct?"

At present, the Parliament can demand the resignation of the entire commission. Mr Hague added that a declaration of financial interests should be established for individual commissioners.

John Major, the former Tory Prime Minister, said: "What this report throws up is an institutional problem that has long existed in the EU. Isn't one of the most important reforms, many years overdue, a clear-cut financial accountability by the commission ideally to the member states of the EU or to a body that reports directly to the member states?"

Sir Edward Heath, the former Tory Prime Minister, said that the most important thing to recognise was that it was "the first time the European Parliament has been prepared to act decisively. Things will never be the same again."



Hope fades for new breed of 'loser lads'

By Adam Sherwin

BRITAIN has produced a class of "loser lads" who believe they will fail at school, work and life, a survey claims. Although magazines aimed at young men, such as *Loaded*, promote a world of consumer-based fun, the real experiences of "lads" are very different.

Teenage boys are struggling to make a mark on a society that places increasing value on the skills of women, says the study from the *Tomorrow's Men* project supported by Oxford University. As a result, more are drifting into crime, and may contemplate suicide.

The survey was based on anonymous interviews with 1,400 males, aged 13 to 19, from across Britain. The aim was to understand their hopes, worries and experiences by asking them about parents, school, work and gender equality. The study, funded by the clothing retailer Topman, found that many adolescents had low self-esteem, which was illustrated by lack of confidence, self-motivation or optimism. The absence of a father, or a father figure, was key to starting this process. Schools in which teachers ignored the problems of boys and failed to implement an anti-bullying policy exacerbated negative feelings.

Such boys, who fall into a category called "Low Can-do" in the report, amounted to 12 per cent of the sample. Of them, 20 per cent have been in trouble with the police, 17 per cent are deeply alienated from school and 11 per cent are depressed or even suicidal.

Boys in this group often respond to their predicament and the success of young women by over-emphasising "macho" behaviour in front of women. They also find it hardest to accept women's emerging equality at work and at home and may try to encourage girlfriends to give up their aspirations.

The survey also found that 25 per cent of boys, described as "Can-do", are positive and motivated. The researchers say, however: "Meeting the needs of 'Low Can-do' boys is urgent for they show a range of behaviours that impact on society."

The youths questioned for the report were invited to respond to newspaper adverts and questionnaires sent to schools and youth clubs.

A sample of boys who took part agreed to speak about their experiences. Sam, 16, said: "I got kicked out of sixth-form college. The tutors said I wasn't doing as well as the others and they thought I should leave. I am now working on a farm." Sam felt that girls had an advantage at school. "They become teachers' pets. Boys seem to get into more trouble," he said. Parents had a role to play, said Piran, 16. "If parents encourage you then it helps you to believe that you can achieve. Mine did."

> 'Teachers say you are a failure and show no interest'

Danny, a 17-year-old, said: "You fail an induction test at school and the teachers say you are a failure. They do not show an interest after that." Danny wanted to achieve despite the example of his parents. "They have not made much of their lives. I don't really want to go the same way.

"I would have preferred to stay on at college but now I have to find a job. There is nothing on the cards at the jobcentre for me. But I want to break out of my family loop." He had no role models to look up to, or to go to for advice. "Every older male relative I know is on the dole."

Adrienne Katz, the project's research director, believes that the plight of teenage boys can only be understood by listening to them. "We need to hear their views," she said.

"Boys can be decisive and proud. They are also funny and loyal, but a number lack confidence."



Some of the teenagers who took part in the survey, which found that many suffered from low self-esteem. *Only a quarter felt optimistic about their prospects*

Athlete adds MBE to her medal haul

By A Correspondent

THE athlete Denise Lewis was as nervous receiving the insignia of her MBE from the Queen yesterday as she was when on the starting line at a championship.

"I calmed myself down as I was waiting but when I saw the Queen there was this wave of emotion and I didn't really know what to say to her," she said at Buckingham Palace.

The gold medallist in last year's European and Commonwealth heptathlons said her honour was "beautiful and fantastic". She was accompanied by her mother, Joan, her grandmother, Edna, and her boyfriend, Jonathan Kron.

Miss Lewis, 26, said she was training hard to achieve her goal of a gold medal at the Sydney Olympics next year.

The actress Maureen Lipman, who was appointed a CBE, said the occasion had lifted her spirits. "I was feeling rather ill on the way here and thought I wouldn't be able to go up and get the award. I told my mother she would have to go up instead and she said she would but only if she could wear my hat. But it's amazing how getting a CBE can cheer you right up," said Miss Lipman, 52, who received the award for services to comedy and drama.

Also with her were her daughter and her husband, the playwright Jack Rosenthal, who in 1993 was appointed CBE. "We are now a two-commander family — we should be looking for a frigate," the actress joked.

The former England football captain and Newcastle United player Stuart Pearce received the insignia of the MBE. "The Queen seemed to be very knowledgeable about football but she didn't mention if she was a fan," he said.

The broadcast journalist Trevor Phillips, 45, who was appointed OBE, said it was remarkable how "unstuffy" the investiture was. Nicholas Serota, the director of the Tate Gallery, was knighted for services to the visual arts.

ANTHONY UPTON

Denise Lewis with her MBE insignia: "When I saw the Queen there was this wave of emotion — I didn't know what to say"

Time is up for the traditional lunch hour



Ladies enter the Long Room



ROY RILEY

Winning team: Jackie Court, Sheila Hill, Rachael Heyhoe Flint, Netta Rheinberg, Norma Izard, in the front row; and behind them, Diana Rait Kerr, Carole Cornthwaite and Audrey Collins, in the Long Room yesterday

The male preserve at Lord's falls as the MCC names its first women members, reports **Claudia Joseph**

TWO former England cricket captains strode into the Long Room yesterday when the first women members of the MCC entered that hallowed hall of Lord's.

The club, which last year finally voted to admit women to its ranks, yesterday named its first ten honorary women members. Eight were at Lord's yesterday, including Rachael Heyhoe Flint, who led the national team for ten years, and Carole Cornthwaite, captain in the 1980s. Betty Archdale, who 65 years ago captained the first England women's touring team to Australia and New Zealand, is also among the ten.

Mrs Heyhoe Flint, 59, recalled that the late cricket commentator Brian Johnston had predicted yesterday's achievement. She said: "I might be referred to as the catalyst because in 1991 I had the temerity to apply to become a member. I wish Johnners was here today because he kept saying to me: 'It will eventually happen but I doubt whether I shall see it in my lifetime.' This means as much to me as when I played here for the first time in 1976 against Australia."

The ten, chosen by a subcommittee, also include Sheila Hill, former chairman of the Women's Cricket Association Umpires and Scorers Sub-Committee; Diana Rait Kerr, former curator of the MCC museum; Netta Rheinberg, former secretary of the Women's Cricket Association; Edna Barker, former captain of South of England; Audrey Collins and Norma Izard, former presidents of the association; and Jackie Court, capped for England 40 times.

Many names had been considered, said Roger Knight, the MCC secretary, and no one disputed that the ten should be members. Mrs Cornthwaite, a senior coach and England Under-21s selector, who took a record 25 catches in Test matches, said she had had no idea she was to be admitted.

The arrival of women at Lord's marks the culmination of a long campaign by Mr Johnston and Sir Tim Rice to admit female members. Yesterday Sir Tim said it had taken time to win people round. "I never wanted to steam in and say — you have to do this. The MCC has an image of crusty old chaps, but it's not."

MCC members will also be allowed to invite women guests to matches. The first MCC women's team will take to the field on May 11 in East Molesey, Surrey. Lord Cowdrey of Tonbridge, the former England captain, said: "I think it's a wonderful day and I look forward to the day when the MCC ladies team makes a big impact in the game."

President's welcome, page 46

Time is up for the traditional lunch hour

By Alexandra Frean
Social Affairs Correspondent

THE traditional lunch "hour" is disappearing from the working day as more employees say they are too busy to take a break.

A study, published today by the British Heart Foundation, says that the culture of long hours dominant in the workplace is putting excessive pressures on people's health, depriving them of rest, relaxation and exercise and making them fat.

More than half of workers surveyed said they took less than 30 minutes for lunch. Women are the most pressured, with a third saying that they did not have a lunch break at all.

More than a third of the 659 between 25 and 50 said they believed that work was adversely affecting their health. Of these, nearly a third said that they had gained weight because of their job.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Molester GP cleared of rape

Jurors cleared a family doctor of raping a girl of 15 yesterday, then gasped when they discovered that he was awaiting sentence for molesting her. At Manchester Crown Court, Dominic Jackson, 47, who ran a surgery in Adswood, near Stockport, had admitted indecent assault but opted to face a jury on the more serious charge. The jury was not told of the guilty plea until Maurice Greene, for the prosecution, stood to tell the court once they had delivered their verdict. Sentence on Jackson, who now lives in Slough, Berkshire, was adjourned for reports.

Hidden treasure

A little-known Georgian mansion has been voted Britain's favourite historic house. Pencarrow House, near Bodmin, Cornwall, is the home of the Molesworth-St Aubyn family. It was honoured in the National Heritage Awards.

Art sold as scrap

A £250,000 working sculpture by the late Rowland Emett, *A Quiet Afternoon in Cloud Cuckoo Valley*, which was stolen from a warehouse in Hertfordshire, was recovered when a dealer reported that he had paid £100 for it for scrap.

Health crust

A former butcher whose pork pies helped to make him a millionaire has left most of his £6 million estate to Doncaster Royal Infirmary and Montagu Hospital NHS Trust. Fred Green, 95, had sold his business to Asda.

Buyers promise to live with peals

By Simon de Bruxelles

THE buyers of 12 expensive homes being built in a south Devon village will be required to sign a pledge promising not to complain about the bells of the 13th-century All Saints Church less than 50 yards away.

Parish councillors in Thurlestone in South Hams mounted the pre-emptive strike against the city folk likely to snap up the £345,000 houses because local people were worried that they might have unrealistic expectations of peace and quiet.

After Rock in Cornwall, Thurlestone is the most expensive resort in the South West. One resident said: "There is a very exclusive golf club and in the summer there are more big industrialists there than at the CBI conference."

Buyers of the three new homes and the nine converted from cattle sheds must endure 90 minutes of bell-ringing practice every Thursday evening, as well as peals during Sunday services, weddings and funerals.

The special clause was written into the deeds of the new homes at the request of the parish council and the parochial church council, and will bar all future owners from taking any legal action against the bells.

Derrick Yeoman, a parish councillor who has been a bell-ringer all his life, said: "There have been many cases of people moving into the countryside and then complaining about the noises or smells.

"We feel that those who come to live among us should accept our ways."

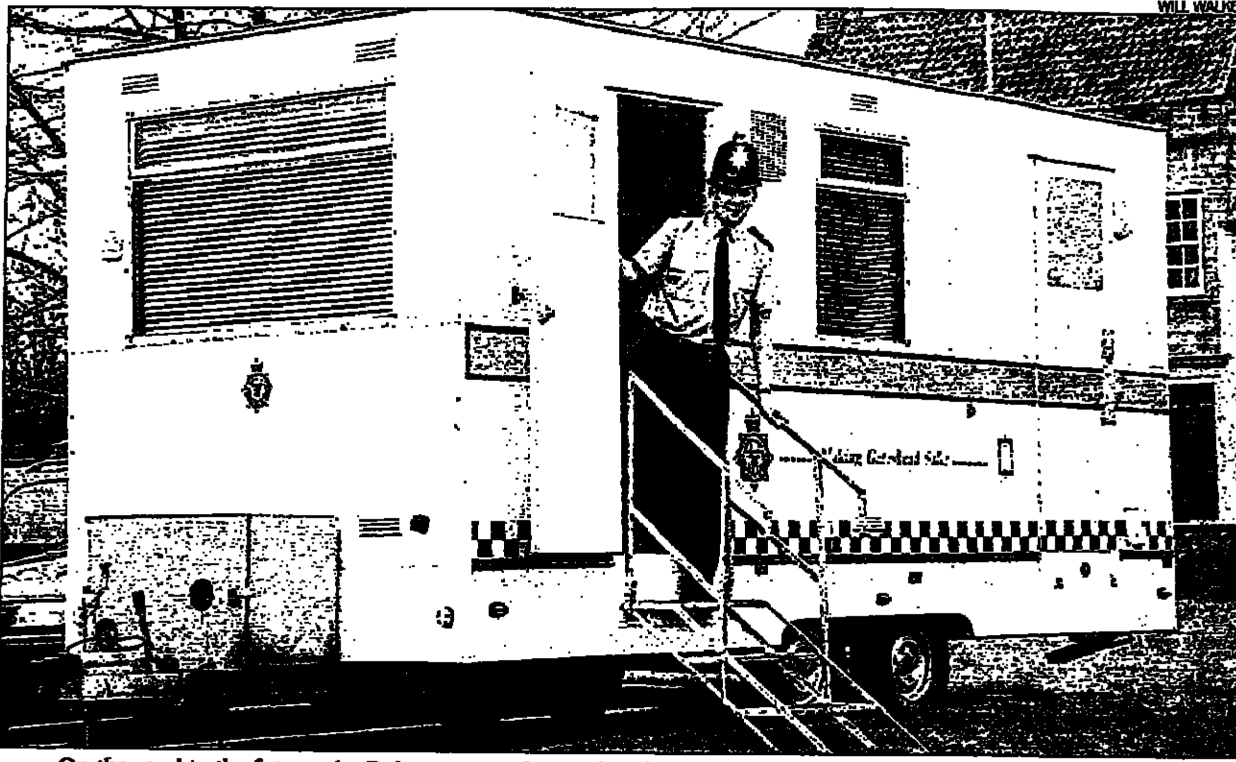
Police stations on the move

Police may be told to close redundant stations

Survey of the efficiency of property use ► likely to suggest radical

How *The Times* previewed the report in September

Audit Commission says buildings are out of date and in the wrong place, reports Stewart Tendler


WILL WALKER

On the road to the future: the Pulse caravan that replaced the Birtley police station is not universally popular

TOO many police stations are out of date, under-used and in the wrong place, according to the Audit Commission.

Police buildings worth at least £110 million are already up for sale and the commission believes that forces could find millions more to bolster their budgets in a rationalisation programme in England and Wales.

In a report published today the commission suggests that instead of traditional stations, police could share centres with fire brigades or neighbouring forces and make use of video links for routine inquiries.

The commission found that "there is a poor fit between the estate and the demands of operational policing in the 21st century". Buildings are in the wrong place because of population shifts, often from city centres; they are the wrong size or are incompatible with modern computer technology.

The report, *Action Stations*, states that the police have 2,700 operational sites and 4,000 police houses or flats in England and Wales worth a minimum of £2.6 billion. A fifth of the 2,000 stations were built before 1931 and only 13 per cent have been built since 1980. Forces have tried to save money by postponing maintenance and repairs costing £205 million are needed.

Forces admitted to the commission that 9 per cent of stations were in the wrong place. One in Hertford is hard to reach because of a new traffic system. Police in Gateshead closed a rural station on the edge of the town because it had not had a visit from the public for 12 months.

Even when forces build new stations to match shifts in population, they can still get it wrong. One spent £5 million for a station on the outskirts of a city to service a new development but the expansion never came.

Looking at public needs, the commission quotes a survey by the Northamptonshire force which found that less than 4 per cent of 300 visitors to stations went to report a crime: lost and found inquiries were the main business. Many urban stations get a lot of people asking for directions, and the commission found that few forces had responded with the obvious solution of putting a map outside.

The commission found that two thirds of stations are open to the public but that only 25 per cent are open 24 hours a day. Nine hundred have cells but only 600 are currently 24-hour custody centres. Inside the stations, up to 30 per cent of space can be lost to non-operational functions such as canteens and gymnasiums. A survey of 12 stations found that on average they had 16 per cent of their space unused.

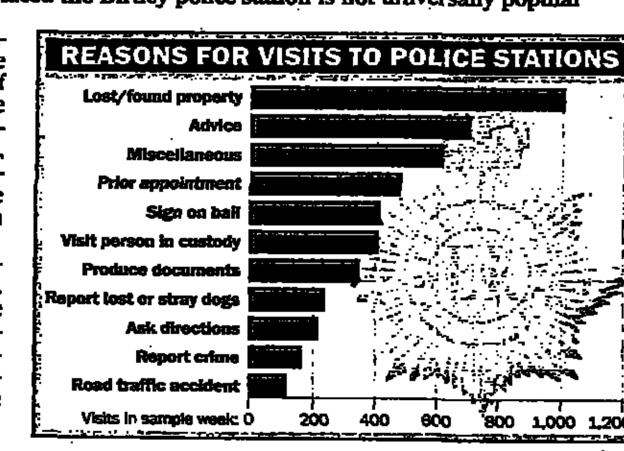
Looking to the future, the commission points to an "interactive" police box opened by Lothian and Borders Police in Princes Street, Edinburgh. The former police box now provides a 24-hour service to the public with a touch-sensitive screen providing emergency messages and maps. It has a two-way link to enable callers to talk to an officer. The box had 32,000 callers in the first two months of operation.

The commission also praises Greater Manchester Police for a property review which concluded that it had 20 per cent more accommodation than it needed. The force plans to close 15 stations and make use of "interactive" links.

Sussex Police has opened a new patrol centre for Eastbourne in an industrial unit on the edge of the town. This has removed overcrowding in the town's central station and put operational staff together.

Commenting on the report, Andrew Foster, Controller of the Audit Commission, said: "If police forces are to meet the public's expectations of a modern and accessible service, they need to extract greater value from their buildings before the passing of time turns them into liabilities."

Welcoming the commission's findings, Paul Boateng, Minister of State at the Home Office, said better management of buildings would benefit the public and release millions of pounds for frontline policing.



Rural office is closed but the beat goes on

By Stewart Tendler and Paul Wilkinson

IN 12 *months not one* member of the public crossed the threshold of Birtley police station on the outskirts of Gateshead in Northumbria. Outside there was a telephone enabling people to call a control centre when the station was unmanned, but no one used that either. Yet the area suffered from low-level disorder.

Today the police win praise from the Audit Commission for the way they replaced the station with an operation called Pulse, in which a police caravan tours local communities. The report says that the force managed the change without incurring hostility from the public. However, that is not a universal view.

Kathy King, a Liberal Democrat councillor, said: "It was one of the most unpopular decisions ever in Birtley. The station was used by the police. Everyone knew the bobbies and the bobbies knew us. Everyone, especially elderly people, felt safe in the knowledge that we had two officers looking out for us. Now our nearest station is eight miles away, you have to wait up to an hour for a policeman to turn up at your door. Crime has increased. People feel deserted."

There was an overlap of six months to try out the change. The caravan is a base for patrols, crime-prevention advice and discussions on crime problems. It spends one or two days at each site on a six-month rota. The sites were picked as problem areas. When the team of five officers is on patrol, the caravan is manned by a civilian. Officials from council housing, engineering, welfare and education departments can attend.

Ms King said: "There are more than 15,000 residents in Birtley and surrounding areas who relied on the station for protection. People like to be able to see a policeman. On Friday night, shop windows in Birtley High Street were smashed after a skirmish outside a pub and it was an age before the police turned up.

"We are assigned beat officers but with shift-change patterns they are nowhere near at the times when we need them most."

Superintendent Brian Graham, the chief of the Gateshead West division, said: "In my view the community-type office was not working. It was easier for people to ring from home than to travel to the station to do the same thing. The only time police officers were there was when they were catching up on community activites or, paperwork.

"We set up the Pulse unit to provide effective policing in the area. We hold four ward surgeries a month in Birtley so people can meet a police officer face to face if they want to. It has had a favourable response from the public and crime is falling as a result."

New law to crack down on juvenile delinquents

By Richard Ford, home correspondent

CHILDREN as young as 12 will be a main target of a new government measure aimed at curbing harassment and bad behaviour on housing estates and the streets.

From April 1, police and local authorities will be able to apply to the courts for Antisocial Behaviour Orders, which bar individuals from causing harassment, alarm or distress to others.

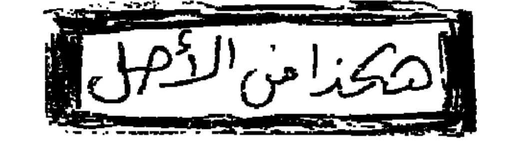
Professional witnesses will be used to gather evidence in support of applications against youths and adults involved in persistent abuse against homosexuals, ethnic minorities, the elderly, the mentally ill or the disabled. The orders will also be used against families who terrorise estates that they consider to be their "patch", intimidating neighbours and forcing residents to move away.

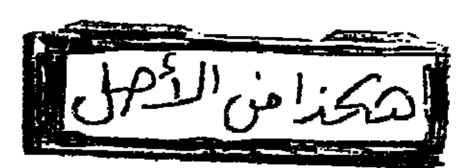
The maximum term for the order will be for two years and a breach will be a criminal offence punishable by up to five years in prison.

Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, said that the orders were intended to tackle the failure of people including parents to take responsibility for their own or their children's actions. "We would expect them to be used quite routinely againsts that middle range of 12 to 17-year-olds, where experience shows they may go on to commit serious acts of antisocial behaviour, some times with adult assistance, sometimes without," he said.

Mr Straw told a conference at Westminster that the Government would not allow the perceived lack of recreational facilities for young people to be used as an excuse for antisocial behaviour, by which teenagers intimidate the public and spoil the quality of people's lives.







CIGARETTE COMPANIES GIVE US A GREAT PRODUCT



HOW CAN WE THANK THEM?

1. Hmmm. Let's think about it over a cigarette.

2. I'll tell you when I get my breath back.

3. I know, let's send round The Voicebox Choir - former smokers who have had their vocal chords surgically removed - to sing their praises.

MICHAEL MOORE: THE AWFUL TRUTH

SERIOUS COMEDY

FBI to oversee Ulster bomb investigation

Outsiders enlisted to meet need for a transparent inquiry, report Martin Fletcher and Ian Brodie

THE RUC has taken the unprecedented step of asking an English police officer and the American FBI to oversee the investigation into the car-bomb murder of Rosemary Nelson in order to counter republican allegations of RUC collusion.

David Phillips, Kent's Chief Constable, is to head the investigation and late on Monday night Sir Ronnie Flanagan, the RUC's Chief Constable, contacted Louis Freeh, the FBI director, to invite FBI participation. The FBI's exact role has yet to be decided but it will contribute independence as well as expertise.

Sir Ronnie is determined not only to track down the killers of the prominent lawyer, but to disprove the Sinn Fein charges that the RUC was itself party to the murder. He said that there would be no constraints placed on Mr Phillips and that his investigation would not only be "the most meticulous it can be, but transparently obvious as such".

The Red Hand Defenders, a loyalist splinter group, has claimed responsibility for the murder but Sinn Fein spokesmen continued to accuse the RUC of collusion yesterday and mounted demonstrations outside police stations.

Sinn Fein has been campaigning furiously for the RUC to be disbanded. It seized on Mrs Nelson's past claims to have been threatened by RUC officers and said the RUC had rejected her request for protection even though her work for high-profile republican clients made her an obvious target.

"It is intolerable that the RUC who threatened Rosemary Nelson's life should then have had the ability to deny her adequate security," Francie Molloy, a Sinn Fein Assemblyman, said. "Those who quite deliberately left Rosemary Nelson exposed and vulnerable to attack despite the very obvious threat to her life are as much responsible for her death as those who carried out the actual assassination."

The RUC and the Northern Ireland Office insisted Mrs Nelson had never applied for protection. Last year others had done so on her behalf but she was not judged to be sufficiently at risk.

Sources described the allegations of collusion as "absolute nonsense" and doubted that Mrs Nelson would have accepted protection.

A senior Metropolitan Police officer recently investigated Mrs Nelson's claims that the RUC had harrassed and threatened her but his report has not yet been published.

Sir Ronnie cast doubt on whether the Red Hand Defenders carried out the murder by themselves when he confirmed that the bomb was more sophisticated than anything they had used previously. The speculation was that they may have been helped by disgruntled members of other loyalist paramilitary groups.

The murder has cast a pall over today's St Patrick's Day celebrations in Washington and complicated President Clinton's task as he tries to help to resolve the decommissioning deadlock in private meetings with David Trimble and Gerry Adams.

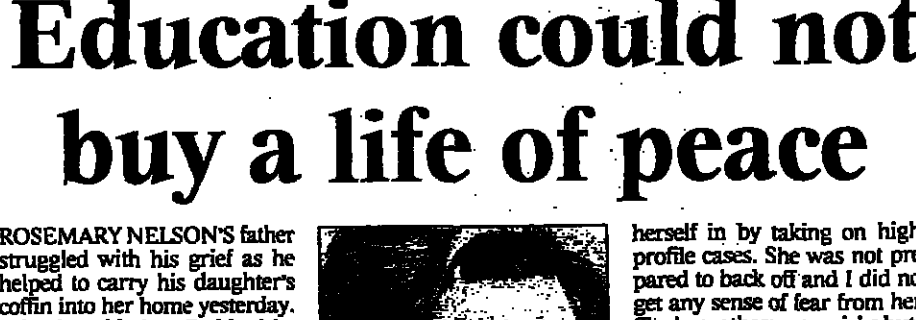
Speaking in New York, George Mitchell, the former US senator who chaired the Stormont peace talks, intensified the pressure on the men when he declared: "History will not forgive them if an agreement, once reached, is not implemented.

"We must be understanding, we must be patient, we must be tolerant, but we must also be insistent as we say to those leaders: 'You have done much but you must do more'," he said.

In Washington Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, said that the bombers would not destroy the Good Friday accord.

PAUL FAITH/PA

Paddy McGee, second left, helping to carry his daughter's coffin into her house in Lurgan yesterday. Hundreds called to pay their respects to the family



Education could not buy a life of peace

ROSEMARY NELSON'S father struggled with his grief as he helped to carry his daughter's coffin into her home yesterday. Friends said that Paddy McGee had worked hard all his life to try to keep his children distanced from the Troubles, spending much of the money he earned as a factory worker on their education.

He and his wife, Sheila, were deeply proud of Rosemary's middle-class lifestyle and success as a solicitor. That she was murdered because of her education was difficult to bear.

"It's terrible, really terrible what has happened," Mrs Nelson's brother-in-law said. A cousin, who declined to be named, said the "disgusting" death had left her parents "shattered".

The Roman Catholic residents of Lurgan were in mourning yesterday for the loss of Mrs Nelson, who had championed their rights. Hundreds of people poured into her red-brick house to pay their respects to her husband, Paul, and children, Gavin, 13, Christopher, 11, and Sarah, 8. The boys had returned early from a school skiing trip and went directly to the morgue so that they could accompany their mother's body home.

Mrs Nelson will be buried in Lurgan tomorrow morning after Mass in St Peter's Church. Father Kieran McPartlan, her parish priest, said she was a fine friend to everyone. "Why would anyone want to take away the life of a lady who did so much good for her family and community?" he asked.



Rosemary Nelson: funeral will be held tomorrow

It was a question being repeated on the nationalist Kilwilkee estate as people huddled in small groups trying to cope with the brutality of the car-bomb murder. The run-down estate, littered with IRA graffiti, is less than five minutes from Mrs Nelson's house.

It is home to many of her former clients, including Colin Duffy. She successfully appealed his conviction for the 1993 murder of a UDR soldier and forced police to drop charges against him for the murder of two officers on patrol in Lurgan in 1997. The latter case particularly angered loyalists.

Asked whether he felt responsible for her death, Mr Duffy said: "Many's the time I have spoken to her about the obvious danger she was putting herself in by taking on high-profile cases. She was not prepared to back off and I did not get any sense of fear from her. She knew there were risks but I suppose, like any human being, she felt that it was not going to come to her door."

Mr Duffy said that no other solicitor would be brave enough to take on republican clients. He, like most republicans, alleges that the security forces colluded in her murder. He said the RUC hated her and attempted to undermine his opinion of her in interrogation.

He also said that police referred repeatedly to her face, scarred since childhood: "They would go on about her being ugly and how could anyone deal with having to look at her."

Sinn Fein has sought to control the anger on the estate since the death by saying that young men should stay indoors at night. Some were, however, preparing petrol bombs yesterday to throw at police patrols. One republican said trouble would start after the funeral.

A silent protest, organised by Sinn Fein, was held last night by residents, who walked from the Kilwilkee estate to Mrs Nelson's office in the town centre. Bouquets lined the door, carrying messages such as "A beautiful woman with a beautiful vision". One mourner left a small tub of shamrock, marking St Patrick's Day, which the rest of Ireland will celebrate today.

Martin Fletcher, page 20

Paras can keep their surnames secret

By Michael Evans

AN ORDER for five soldiers to be identified for a new inquiry in the Bloody Sunday shootings was overruled in the High Court yesterday.

The paratroopers had been ordered to give their surnames when appearing before the inquiry panel investigating the 1972 killing of 13 civilians in Londonderry.

Yesterday Vice-President Lord Justice Kennedy, sitting with Mr Justice Owen and Mr Justice Blofeld, said the decision was flawed because there was a misunderstanding about the nature of anonymity granted to the soldiers by the original Widgery inquiry in 1972, nor did it take into account an assessment of the threat they faced.

The decision not to grant absolute anonymity was "unlawful and invalid". Lord Justice Kennedy said it was still up to the inquiry to decide on the basis of the arguments whether the soldiers should have anonymity.

Claims of RUC threats could end in sackings

By Stewart Tendler, crime correspondent

RUC officers could face criminal charges over allegations that they threatened and harassed Rosemary Nelson.

Ronnie Flanagan, Chief Constable of the RUC, said yesterday that he had sent a Scotland Yard file on the claims to Alasdair Fraser, the Northern Ireland Director of Public Prosecutions.

The Independent Commission for Police Complaints for Northern Ireland, which has overseen the investigations, has also received a report from Scotland Yard and will make a statement later this week. If there are no criminal charges it could consider disciplinary action.

Mrs Nelson had made several public complaints about her treatment by the RUC. She claimed there had been repeated RUC death threats, an RUC officer had spat in her face and another had hit her over the back of the head with a riot shield.

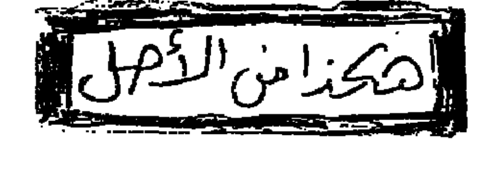
The RUC began investigating the claims in 1997. Last April she reported that problems were continuing. She said a detective at Castlereagh detention centre had made derogatory remarks about her to one of her clients, and she gave evidence to a United Nations group looking at allegations of intimidation of lawyers by RUC officers.

Last July the complaints commission went to Mr Flanagan and to Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, to put forward "serious concerns" about the RUC handling of the case, but refused to give details publicly.

The commission added that it had a statutory and ethical obligation to ensure that all complaints were thoroughly and satisfactorily investigated. When Mr Flanagan proposed to hand the inquiry over to Commander Neil Mulvihill, head of the Yard's organised crime group, the authority insisted on meeting and vetting him.

Mr Mulvihill began work last summer with a small team of officers. The operation was so sensitive that few senior officers in his department knew what he was doing. The report was completed very recently apart from one or two administrative additions which are thought to concern recommendations to the RUC for the future.

INSIDE SECTION 2
Inner cities look East: New housing for ethnic communities
Homes - pages 38-40



Number's up for calculator in maths drive

New initiative will encourage primary school children to learn basics, reports Hannah Betts

MATHEMATICS should no longer be the preserve of swots, Tony Blair said yesterday as he launched a teaching strategy requiring more use of the brain and less of calculators in primary schools.

The Prime Minister told an audience of teachers and business leaders in London: "For too long maths has been seen by too many people as unfashionable, a subject for swots. We must forge a new status for maths within society as a whole. This means destroying the myth that it's clever to be hopeless at maths."

Carol Vorderman, the television presenter who is supporting the Government's Maths Year 2000 campaign, said: "People who like maths are seen as freaks. Well if so then I'm head girl of the freak school."

The mathematics drive, which involves a daily numeracy hour at all primary schools as part of the £55 million National Numeracy Strategy, follows this year's National Year of Reading and the Government's daily literacy hour.

Yesterday's launch saw the publication of detailed advice for teachers. They were issued with a weighty framework document laying out the teaching of mathematics from reception class to the final year of primary school. The document gives sample questions that indicate the level of attainment required for each age group. Use of calculators is discouraged.

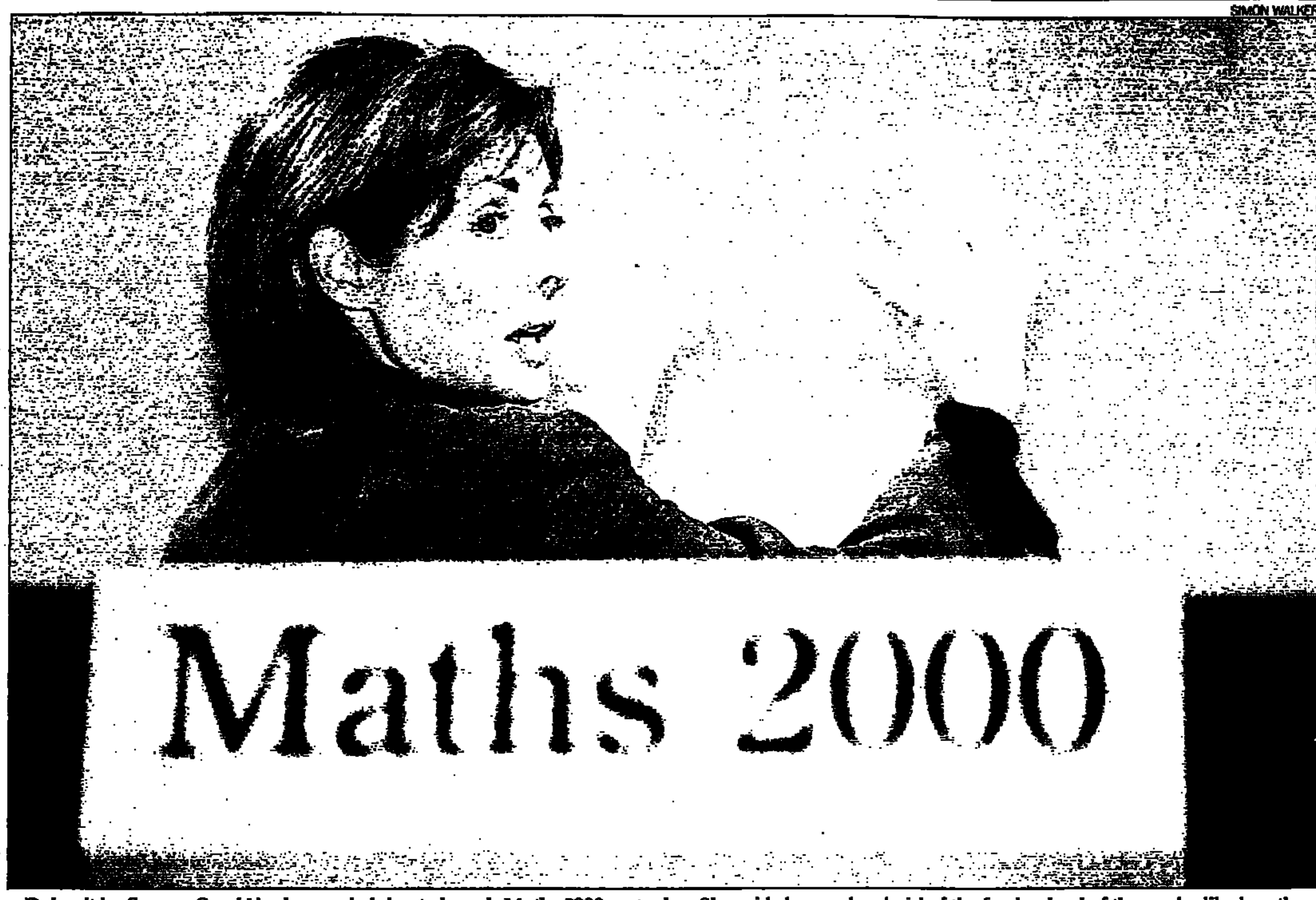
The Government's aim is for 75 per cent of all 11 year olds to be reaching the mathematics standards expected for their age by 2002. Four out of ten 11 year olds failed to reach the target last year.

The Government will involve adults to achieve a sea change in the way society feels about mathematics. Three thousand parents will join their children on 500 family numeracy courses and will be encouraged to brush up their times tables.

David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education, was the first adult volunteer, arriving fresh from a mathematics test on Radio 4's *Today* programme. He took 14 seconds to answer twelve times nine correctly, but at least managed to avoid the gaffe of his former deputy, Stephen Byers, who suggested that eight times seven was 54 at a mathematics promotion last year.

Teachers' unions reacted cautiously to the numeracy drive. Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the National Association of School Masters and Union of Women Teachers, said: "Many teachers will appreciate the rich irony in the Government's employing Carol Vorderman to launch Maths Year 2000. She earns more for one day's TV work than many teachers earn in a whole year and unlike Carol, teachers can't have their mistakes edited out."

David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said that while the National Numeracy Strategy would not be as controversial as the Literacy Strategy, some concerns would remain. "It is tied too closely to the Government's artificial national targets, and its introduction, along with the Literacy Strategy, threatens to marginalise the rest of the National Curriculum. The NAHT has no objection to Maths Year 2000 but quite frankly every year is a maths year in all schools."



SIMON WALKER

Doing it by fingers: Carol Vorderman helping to launch Maths 2000 yesterday. She said she was head girl of the freak school of those who liked maths

Actress wins by recounting her lines

By Susie Steiner

A SOAP star trounced politicians and a professor yesterday in three multiplication teasers set by *The Times*. Barbara Windsor, of *EastEnders* and the *Carry On* films, gave the fastest answers and said: "Well, you don't want to look like a berk, do you?"

We asked three questions that have teased government ministers: seven times eight (56), which famously tripped up Stephen Byers when he was Schools Minister; nine times eight (72), asked of David Blunkett, the Education Secretary, a year ago; and 12 times nine, (108), which took Mr Blunkett 14 seconds on the *Today* programme yesterday.

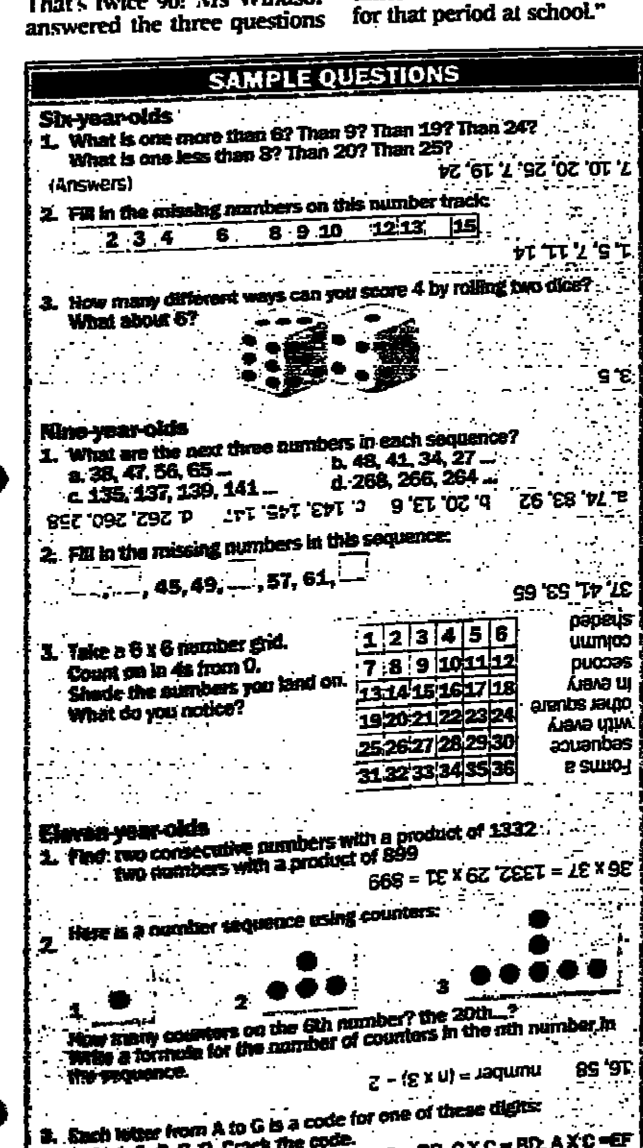
Heinz Wolff, celebrity inventor and Emeritus Professor of Bioengineering at Brunel University, answered the first two questions in two seconds each, and the third in three seconds. He said: "I like playing with numbers. If I'm at a wedding and on the board is hymn number 192, then I think. That's twice 96!" Ms Windsor answered the three questions accurately in under two seconds each.

"It's my era," she explained. "I'm 61 and we had to learn our tables by heart. I don't have any problem with maths. I've got a ridiculous memory and I did enjoy maths. My mother would be really really proud."

David Willetts, the Shadow Education Secretary who is known as "Two Brain Willetts" among some parliamentarians, answered the first question in four seconds, the second in three seconds and the third in four seconds.

He said: "We used to recite them by rote. My worry about what the Government is doing is simply that their strategy is indiscriminate and compulsory."

Peter Stringfellow, 58, the nightclub owner, took 20 seconds on the first question, eight seconds on the next and 15 seconds on the last with a couple of incorrect attempts. He said: "I never learnt my times tables because I was ill for that period at school."



SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Six-year-olds

1. What is one more than 6? Than 9? Than 19? Than 24? What is one less than 8? Than 20? Than 25?
   (Answers) 7, 10, 20, 25, 7, 19, 24
2. Fill in the missing numbers on this number track:
   2 3 4 6 8 9 10 12 13 15
   1, 5, 7, 11, 14
3. How many different ways can you score 4 by rolling two dice? What about 6?
   3, 5

Nine-year-olds

1. What are the next three numbers in each sequence?
   a. 38, 47, 56, 65 ... b. 48, 41, 34, 27 ... c. 135, 137, 139, 141 ... d. 268, 266, 264 ...
   a. 74, 83, 92 b. 20, 13, 6 c. 143, 145, 147 d. 262, 260, 258
2. Fill in the missing numbers in this sequence:
   ___, ___, 45, 49, ___, 57, 61, ___
   37, 41, 53, 65
3. Take a 6 x 6 number grid. Count on in 4s from 0. Shade the numbers you land on. What do you notice?

1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36

Forms a sequence with every other square in every second column shaded

Eleven-year-olds

1. Find: two consecutive numbers with a product of 1332; two numbers with a product of 899
   36 x 37 = 1332, 29 x 31 = 899
2. Here is a number sequence using counters: 1, 2, 3
   How many counters on the 6th number? the 20th...? Write a formula for the number of counters in the nth number in the sequence.
   16, 58 number = (n x 3) - 2
3. Each letter from A to G is a code for one of these digits: 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9. Crack the code.
   C X C = BD, A X C = EF, A + A = B, A X A = DF, A + C = DE, C + C = DB
   A = 4, B = 8, C = 9, D = 1, E = 3, F = 6, G = 5

IOC members 'out to get' Samaranch

Olympic leaders are braced for turmoil, writes John Goodbody in Lausanne

THE Olympics chief, Juan Antonio Samaranch, has admitted to close associates that there is a campaign among leading members of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to force his resignation over the cash-for-votes corruption scandal.

On the eve of what promises to be the most turbulent day in the Olympic movement since Ben Johnson was found positive for drugs at the 1988 Olympics, 91 IOC members were gathering for a meeting in Lausanne.

A vote is due today on whether Señor Samaranch should remain as president and whether to expel the six members who received favours from Salt Lake City in its successful bid to stage the 2002 Winter Games.

Four members of the committee have already resigned.

Sources said yesterday that Señor Samaranch, who has held his post since 1980 but has refused responsibility for the biggest crisis in the organisation's 106-year history, is considering several options. One is that he should stay on until his planned retirement in 2001. Another is to retire after the Sydney Olympics in September 2000. A third is to give up when the IOC meets in Seoul, South Korea, in June. The fourth, which is considered the least likely, is to resign immediately.

Several leading members are aware that large segments of the international community and some sponsors believe that Señor Samaranch should take personal responsibility and resign. Such an action, they believe, would show the world that a new era in the Olympics is beginning.

However, several of his possible successors fear that if they try to persuade Señor Samaranch to resign within the next few months, they risk losing the support of other members.

Kevin Gosper, an Australian member of the executive, said yesterday that no decision had yet been taken on how the vote on Señor Samaranch's future would be taken. If may be by secret ballot or by show of hands. Señor Samaranch's supporters would prefer that because members would be more reluctant publicly to oppose him. Each of the six members facing expulsion will today be allowed 20 minutes to defend himself before his fellow members.

A two-thirds majority is required for expulsion. The six are: Seuili Paul Wallwork of Samoa; Lamine Keita of Mali; Agustin Arroyo of Ecuador; Zein el-Abdin Ahmed Abdel Gadir of Sudan; Sergio Santander Fantini of Chile; and Jean-Claude Ganga of Congo.

Mr Ganga yesterday launched a bitter criticism of the move to expel him, accusing the six-man investigating panel and the executive board of seeking revenge for the occasion in 1976 when he led the black African boycott of the Montreal Olympics.

Mr Ganga said that there was an attempt to "stop Africa having an influence in the IOC. They are trying to stop us being at the centre of decision-making in world sport."

☐ **Sydney:** Phil Coles, An Australian member of the IOC, denied accusations of freeloading and gift-taking that threaten his career. Amid growing moves to drop him from the Sydney committee preparing for the 2000 Games, he said allegations that he took £24,600 in travel and accommodation from Salt Lake City were a myth. *(AFP)*


NIKOLA SOLIC / REUTERS

Troops of the 1st Battalion King's Own Royal Border Regiment patrolling Skopje airbase yesterday as part of the Nato force in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia poised to rescue peace monitors in Kosovo if necessary

Serbs 'would rather fight'

SERBIAN officials told mediators at the Kosovo peace talks yesterday that Belgrade would rather fight Nato than sign up to an autonomy deal for the province which they said had been finalised behind their backs (Tom Walker writes). But sources close to the mediators said the posturing belied a nervousness among the Serbs, whom one diplomat said had been "badly rattled" by the sudden Albanian agreement to the Contact Group's three-year transition blueprint. Wolfgang Petritsch, the EU mediator, told the Serbs that Nato bombing was "days, not weeks, away".

☐ Sarajevo: Jozo Leutar, the Croat Deputy Interior Minister of Bosnia's Muslim-Croat federation, was critically ill yesterday after a car bomb attack here. *(Reuters)*

Jordan to purchase British tanks

By Michael Evans
Defence Editor

THE Royal Jordanian Army is to buy a "substantial" number of British Challenger tanks, it was announced yesterday.

Britain's main battle tanks, which were deployed in the Gulf War, are now being replaced by a more advanced Challenger 2, which first came into service in June last year. Although the British and Jordanian governments are still discussing the matter, the sale could involve hundreds of tanks.

The British Army has about 400 Challenger 1s, all of which will be surplus once the full order for Challenger 2s has been completed.

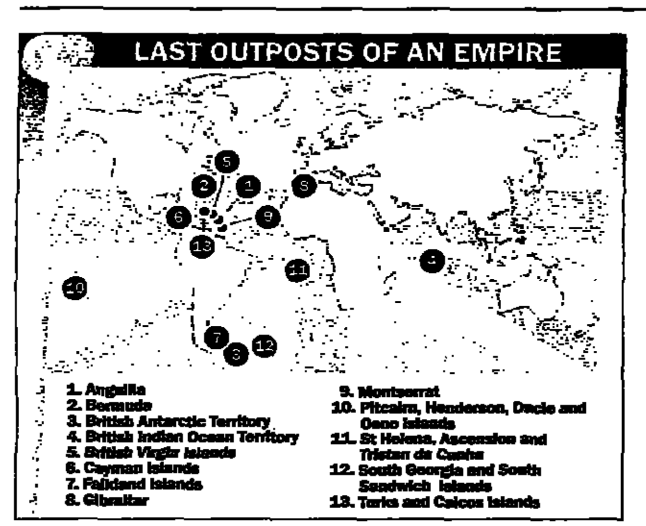
Paul Beaver of *Jane's Defence Weekly* said the Challenger 1s would replace the Jordanian Tariq tank, which is based on the Centurion, and would supplement the Khalid tank, which he said has "high levels of commonality with the Challenger". Mr Beaver said he understood that concerns over classified systems, including the Chobham armour fitted to Challengers, had been resolved.

Lord Gilbert, the Defence Procurement Minister, said during a visit to Amman yesterday that the exact number of tanks to be sold and the delivery dates had yet to be agreed.

The deal is the first arms agreement between Britain and Jordan since King Hussein died. Although the Challengers are relatively old, they will significantly strengthen Jordan's defence forces.

☐ Taba: King Abdullah of Jordan, making his first official visit to an Arab country since coming to the throne, held talks in Taba with President Mubarak of Egypt.

The two leaders attended the inauguration of a link between their countries' electricity supply systems through a submarine cable between Taba and Jordan's southern city of Aqaba — the first step on the way to a broader Arab electricity grid. "This is the first practical step to link economic ties after King Hussein's death," an Egyptian official said. *(Reuters)*



Cook opens door to 150,000 new citizens

By Michael Binyon
Diplomatic Editor

AFTER a long delay, Robin Cook is to tell Parliament today that Britain is to restore full British citizenship to all 150,000 inhabitants of its 13 dependent territories as soon as possible. A Bill will be introduced in the next Parliament and those involved are expected to be given full British passports within a year.

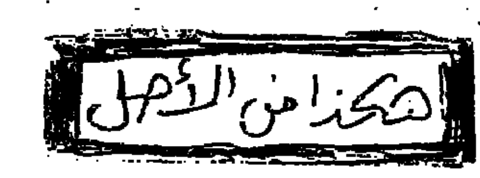
Labour sees the Foreign Secretary's move as an overdue rectification of the hardship caused by the Conservative Government's 1981 Immigration Act, which deprived all those living in Britain's remaining colonies of an automatic right to British citizenship. The result was to bar them from working or settling in Britain, to restrict their travel and confine them to tiny islands plagued by high unemployment.

About 150,000 people in all will be eligible for new passports: inhabitants of Gibraltar and the Falkland Islands are already full citizens. The change will allow everyone living in the dependencies scattered between Bermuda and the Pitcairn Islands to travel to the European Union without visas. It will also give them full Westminster voting rights if they move to Britain, though not in their own islands.

The Bill was supposed to be ready six months ago; however, it ran into the bureaucracy of the Home Office, which insisted on making a thorough investigation. Home Office officials were afraid of setting unwelcome immigration precedents.

The Government does not expect any mass immigration to Britain, especially as living standards in Bermuda, the Cayman Islands and the British Virgin Islands are higher than in Britain. These territories account for almost half the population of those eligible for new passports. Labour made clear at a summit of all the former colonies last year that it regarded the present situation as unjust. The 1981 Act was passed to stop the six million inhabitants of Hong Kong moving to Britain before the handover to China. It hurt the remote and poorer territories, especially St Helena, one of the most isolated, which has high unemployment and depends on a yearly £3.2 million subsidy from Britain.

For three territories, citizenship is irrelevant: British Antarctic Territory, South Georgia and British Indian Ocean Territory are uninhabited.



UN order on Jerusalem 'is null and void'

By Christopher Walker in Jerusalem

DIFFERENCES between Israel and Europe over the status of Jerusalem widened yesterday when Israel announced as "null and void" an historic 1947 United Nations resolution that called for the internationalisation of the Holy City.

In remarks in Jerusalem to foreign ambassadors, Ariel Sharon, Israel's hawkish Foreign Minister, said: "Resolution 181, which speaks about Jerusalem not being part of Israel, is null and void. We have a very wide national consensus about this issue."



Sharon: rules out new struggle for Jerusalem

The city's legal status re-emerged as a divisive issue last week when Israel demanded, but failed to secure, a pledge from European Union diplomats that they would not meet Palestinian diplomats in the eastern sector of the city, captured by Israel in 1967 but claimed by the Palestinians as the capital of their future state.

Along with the future of Israeli troops in Lebanon, the future of Jerusalem has suddenly emerged as a key issue in Israeli election on May 17, with the right-wing Government led by Binyamin Netanyahu claiming that it has the best credentials to withstand international pressure on the sovereignty issue.

In the last poll, in 1996, Mr Netanyahu and his Likud party made much of claims that Shimon Peres, then Labour Party leader, would have permitted the city again to be divided into Arab and Jewish halves. Ehud Barak, his successor and former chief of staff, has shown determination not to display any such taste for compromise on the Jerusalem question, which is regarded as the most difficult facing the stalled peace process.

Yesterday Mr Sharon recalled for the envoys his military past as a platoon commander in the Middle East war at Israel's founding in 1948 and told them: "It is very hard to imagine that after all those years, we again have to struggle for Jerusalem."

The future status of the city is supposed to be a central issue in the talks on a final-status peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians that have been stalled for some time. The UN considers east Jerusalem an occupied territory and stands by Resolution 181 which was part of the partition of British Mandate Palestine.

The European Union in the letter which sparked the latest controversy said that Jerusalem was a separate entity. The Israeli Government hit back by releasing a hardline statement vowing never to agree to the division or internationalisation of the city which it claims to have been its capital for 3,000 years.

ANDRE DURAND / EPA

An Israeli army doctor helps an Egyptian Bedu at Haref Mountain yesterday as the Supreme Court ordered the army not to remove 600 Egyptian Beduin forcibly from Israeli territory pending a court hearing on their request for asylum.

Army told to let Beduin remain

Members of the al-Azazmeh tribe have trekked across the border with camels, donkeys and provisions. Conflicting reports have said that the exodus was because of the severe drought in the region or to escape a blood feud. Troops who were ready to remove the tribe were stopped by the Supreme Court ruling, a Negev regional council spokeswoman said. *(AP)*

Millions may not be able to see Holy Land sites

By Christopher Walker

ISRAELI and Palestinian experts said yesterday that although millions of pilgrims are expected in the Holy Land for millennium year, only a fraction will be able to see the two main Christian sites, the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem and Bethlehem's Church of the Nativity.

The warning was delivered at a conference to announce plans for coping with the influx, estimated at as many as 4.5 million people by some officials. The final total will depend largely on how safe Jerusalem and the West Bank are.

Shabtai Shai, director-general of Israel's Tourism Ministry, believed that all the likely bottlenecks, such as transport and entry into the country, could be overcome with the exception of the Holy Sepulchre, the site where many believe Jesus was buried. "Of the holy sites, it is the only problem. We have estimated that it cannot take more than 750,000 visitors a year. I do not see any solution," the *Jerusalem Post* reported Mr Shai as saying.

The main obstacle to permitting access to more pilgrims is the problem of persuading the three main Christian denominations that control the church, the Greek Orthodox, the Roman Catholic and the Armenian Orthodox to agree to changes to improve safety.

Mr Shai noted a suggestion by government officials to create an extra exit from the church, which has only one at present. The heads of the three denominations have agreed to the idea in theory, but there has been no agreement where it should be.

"To change even a small stone in the church is almost impossible," Mr Shai said.

In addition to the "Big Three" which control the site in Jerusalem's Old City, conquered by Israel in 1967, three other Christian communities — the Coptic, Ethiopian and Syrian — also have limited rights there, which has added to the complications.

Similar problems of overcrowding beset the Church of the Nativity, which will be the focal point for millennium celebrations under the aegis of the Palestinian Authority led by Yassir Arafat, himself a Muslim.

Hani Abu-Dayyeh, vice-president of the Near East Tourist Agency, said that the church, believed to be built over the birthplace of Jesus, could handle only about a million visitors a year.

Many pilgrims wished to worship, not just pay a quick visit. "You have to make sure the worshippers can pray. You cannot just push them in and out," he said.

Many Palestinian speakers at the conference complained of an Israeli roadblock that delays passage between Jerusalem and Bethlehem by up to two hours for each tourist coach. Moshe Katsav, the Israeli Tourism Minister, said that the checkpoint was necessary to ensure security.

US 'aid for witchcraft' angers Helms

From Ben Macintyre in Washington

THE American Government has acknowleged that participants in a US-funded health training programme in Haiti may have taken part in voodoo ceremonies, after allegations that the US is funding "witchcraft" in the Caribbean island.

Senator Jesse Helms, chairman of the powerful Senate Foreign Relations Committee, has written to Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, expressing concern that money sent to Haiti from the US Agency for International Development (USAID) may be being used for voodoo ceremonies, the religion imported by West Afrcian slaves and then melded with aspects of Roman Catholicism. Mr Helms said he feared that US aid money was "funding programmes that endorse what amounts to witchcraft" and he demanded that no money should find its way to groups that "produce material intended to be used in a voodoo ceremony".

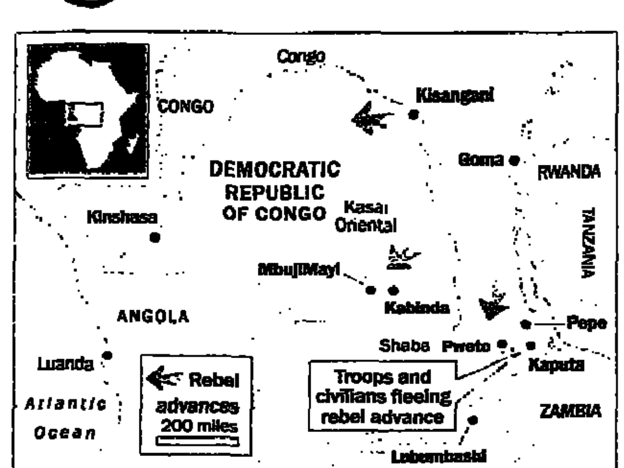
He said: "If there were prizes for the most outrageous foreign aid programme, this would be in line for first place." Ecstatic trances, superstition and magic rituals play an important part in voodoo, long associated with the occult in Western eyes.

James Rubin, the State Department spokesman, denied that US funds were being used to promote voodoo, but agreed that students in a healthcare programme funded by the US may have taken part in voodoo ceremonies. "While some traditional practitioners may have participated in voodoo ceremonies, USAID funding has not been used to support those practices," he said.

Mr Helms said the issue emerged after USAID funded a programme by the local Planned Parenthood group "that utilised traditional Haitian health practitioners for distributing information on family planning" and sought to use voodoo ceremonies as an "important social network".

Congo rebels kill Mugabe troops

From Robin Lodge in Nairobi



UP TO 150 Zimbabwean soldiers are reported to have been killed in battles with rebel forces in the southeast of the Democratic Republic of Congo, while thousands of refugees *have been streaming across* the border with Zambia to escape the fighting.

A military expert on the region, citing rebel sources, said yesterday that at least 80 Zimbabweans had been killed in the clashes — identified by documents found on the bodies — but that there could be more bodies hidden in the bush.

A rebel commander said that 150 had been killed, in*cluding a battalion command*er, while four armoured vehicles and several military lorries had been captured. He said four Zimbabweans had been taken prisoner.

The fighting comes after a Zimbabwean-led attack on rebel forces last week aimed at halting a rebel advance on the diamond town of MbujiMayi.

The Zimbabwean media reported that more than 230 *Ugandan soldiers had been* killed in fighting with forces supporting President Kabila near MbujiMayi, 50 miles west of Kabinda.

The reports, which have not had independent confirmation, also said the losses had included a battalion commander. The latest claims have also proved impossible to verify, with no independent observers to witness the fighting, *which the rebels said* took place over the past few days near the towns of Pepa, Pweto and Kabinda in Shaba province. Last week, a rebel spokesman *said their forces had* killed 300 troops loyal to President Kabila.

The Times of Zambia reported on Monday that at least 10,000 civilians, including a *number of French settlers*, had crossed the border. Yesterday a spokesman for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees said people were passing through one crossing point at Kalanda at a rate of 900 an hour. Those fleeing were also said to include 800 Congo Government soldiers.

☐ Harare: A Zimbabwe defence headquarters spokesman, Colonel Chancellor Diye, *dismissed* last night as propaganda claims of the first serious reverse since President Mugabe sent 8,000 troops to the Democratic Republic of Congo last August (Michael Hartnack writes). "That is a lie," the colonel responded when asked about reports from both Nairobi and Kigali of a pitched battle on Monday.

LINKS

http://droongo.org/frames/index.html — Congo website
http://www.marekinc.com/NCN.html — New Congo Net
http://www.sadc-usa.net/ — Southern African Development Committee



President Clinton and his wife host a millennium event yesterday at the White House dedicated to "Women as Citizens". In a New York poll, 10 per cent of voters wanted to know "why Hillary still stays with the President"

Mayor dashes Hillary's Senate hopes

Poll shows New Yorkers favour Giuliani, reports Ben Macintyre in Washington

HILLARY CLINTON may be having second thoughts about trying for elected office after the latest opinion poll indicated that she would be easily defeated by Rudolph Giuliani, the New York Mayor, in a possible race for the US Senate.

The survey, by Zogby International pollsters, put Mr Giuliani "comfortably" ahead of Mrs Clinton with 48.4 per cent to 36.9 per cent of the vote, *indicating that winning* the New York Senate seat would be an uphill struggle that could easily end in humiliation for the President's wife.

"There was a kind of honeymoon after she announced she was thinking of running, but now it is clear what a major battle she would face if she runs against Giuliani. The honeymoon is clearly over," John Zogby said.

Democratic voters in New York still favour Mrs Clinton as a Senate candidate, but New Yorkers in general hold a more favourable view of their Republican Mayor. The poll *indicated that* voters were particularly uncertain why Mrs Clinton would want to run for the seat and what she intends to do for New York State should she win it. The scandals of recent months and the state of the Clintons' marriage have also had an effect on her possible candidature because nearly 10 per cent of voters "wanted to know why she still stays with the President".

Neither Mrs Clinton nor Mr Giuliani have formally announced they will run for the Senate seat to be vacated by Daniel Patrick Moynihan, but in the aftermath of her hus*band's impeachment trial* Mrs Clinton made clear that she was considering a bid, prompting a frenzy of excitement in Democratic circles and some sharply critical remarks from Mr Giuliani.

Mrs Clinton's backers insisted that she would be impossible to beat if she decided to run in the race and an initial poll by *Time*/CNN indicated that she was supported by 52 per cent to Mr Giuliani's 43 per cent. But as sympathy for her ordeal as a wronged wife has faded, so has her popularity.

The Senate job is only one of several options being considered by Mrs Clinton after her husband leaves office, ranging from founding a public policy unit to serving in the Cabinet of a possible future Democratic Administration. Mrs Clinton is also weighing whether *to head a charity foundation* or take up an academic post.

"Most of the universities in the country would give anything to have her come and teach," Donna Shalala, the *Health and Human Services* Secretary and a firend of Mrs Clinton, said.

Financial considerations may play a part in her final decision because the Clintons have little in the way of savings, no home of their own and vast legal bills, although a defence fund is working to raise cash to pay the bills. As a writer and lecturer she could earn millions of dollars in the aftermath of the Clinton presidency, but as a senator Mrs Clinton would be barred from sitting on corporate boards or delivering paid speeches.

Mr Clinton has observed *that his wife would make a* "terrific" senator, but with one eye, perhaps, on the family's bank statement, he has also remarked that she could earn "$20 million" (£12 million) after he leaves office.

As a senator Mrs Clinton would earn $136,000 a year, but it has been estimated that she would earn about $50,000 a lecture, and at least $5 million alone from a tell-all book about her time in the White House.

"The more she reveals, the more valuable the project would be," Judith Regan, a New York literary agent, said.

☐ *Hat in the ring:* Steve Forbes, the publisher, promising a "new information age campaign", yesterday became the first person to announce his presidential candidature on the Internet. *(Reuters)*



Giuliani: "comfortably" ahead of Mrs Clinton

Clinton offers new debt plan for Africa

Washington: President Clinton called on countries yesterday to pursue a broad approach to debt relief and write off $70 billion (£43 billion), mostly in Africa.

Calling for a partnership with Africa, Mr Clinton announced the initiative in a speech to the opening session of a US-Africa ministerial meeting at the State Department. His proposal extended the US commitment to providing more relief to a broader range of heavily indebted poor countries more quickly and with strong reform programmes. *"What I am proposing* is debt reduction that is deeper and faster," he told ministers from 46 African countries.

He proposed "complete forgiveness" of bilateral *concessional* loans. *(Reuters)*

هكذا من الأصل



Firefighters survey the wreck after a train bound for New Orleans hit a lorry on a level crossing



TROY T. HEINZEROTH

The scene of devastation after the rail crash at Bourbonnais, Illinois, south of Chicago, yesterday. Two engines and 11 carriages left the tracks

At least 13 die as US train hits lorry

FROM DAMIAN WHITWORTH IN WASHINGTON

AT least 13 people were killed, with others missing, and more than 100 were injured yesterday after a passenger train ploughed into a lorry at a level crossing at Bourbonnais, south of Chicago.

Rescuers spent yeterday sifting through the wreckage of the Amtrak train looking for survivors. There had been 217 people on board, including the crew, when the overnight train from Chicago to New Orleans hit the lorry on a crossing on Monday night.

The driver of the lorry, which was carrying steel from a local plant, was believed to have survived. Most of the train was derailed and fires broke out in several carriages. Some of those taken to hospital were in a critical condition.

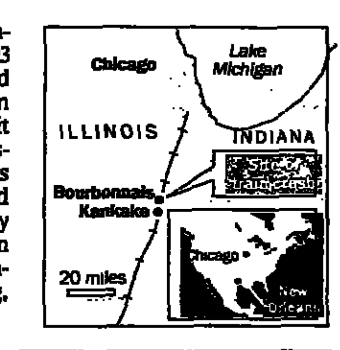
As rescuers searched the train the word "empty" was sprayed on carriages when it was clear that there were no survivors inside. But more than ten people were unaccounted for and firemen expressed little hope of finding anyone else alive. Their search was concentrated on a twisted sleeper carriage which was expected to contain more bodies.

Lee Bullock, president of Amtrak Inter City, told reporters that the cause of the accident was not known. The crossing was protected by gates. The investigation is expected to centre on whether the gates and lights, which were flashing after the accident, were working before the collision. The train consisted of two engines and 14 carriages. Both engines and all but the last three carriages left the tracks. One of the engines split in two.

The gravest accident in Amtrak history happened in 1993 when 47 people were killed near Mobile, Alabama, when a tug hit a bridge and caused it to collapse as a train was passing over it. In another serious accident, 11 people were killed and 26 injured in February 1996 when an Amtrak train smashed head-on into a commuter train in Silver Spring, just outside Washington.

LINKS

http://patsweb.com/trainframe.htm — Details of the train involved in the crash
http://www.ntsb.gov/ — The US National Safety Board
http://www.amtrak.com/ — The website for Amtrak



Paula Jones and husband announce separation

Jones: moved back to live near her mother

FROM DAMIAN WHITWORTH IN WASHINGTON

IN PUBLIC they have put on a show of commitment to each other, but in private their marriage was plagued by rows and proved unable to survive the accusation that the President of the United States was guilty of sexual harassment. Paula Jones — the woman whose legal action against Bill Clinton triggered the Monica Lewinsky scandal — has separated from her husband.

Mrs Jones has said that she and her husband, Steve, had no immediate plans to divorce but she is moving back to live near her mother in Arkansas while he remains at their condominium in Long Beach, California. She said that they were "not going to get ugly with each other" and were no different from many other couples who live apart because of different career ambitions and interests.

"I wanted to get back closer to my family and friends," Mrs Jones told *USA Today*. "In California, I had to be very careful about who I got to know, so I didn't develop any close friendships."

The newspaper said the couple had been discussing a separation for some time after disagreements over the strategy in the sexual harassment case and how to spend the money from the out-of-court settlement with Mr Clinton.

Mrs Jones claimed that in 1991, when she was engaged to Steve and Mr Clinton was Governor of Arkansas, she visited him in a hotel room where he asked her to perform oral sex. The affair with Ms Lewinksy emerged when the former White House trainee was asked to submit an affidavit in Mrs Jones's harassment case.

James Carville, Mr Clinton's former adviser, suggested that Mrs Jones was "trailer park" trash, but in November Mr Clinton eventually settled with an $850,000 (£524,690) payment that was not accompanied by an apology or admittance of wrongdoing. After paying her lawyers, Mrs Jones was left with $201,000. She plans to take a job as a manicurist and is considering offers from the media.

Mr Jones has been unemployed since being dismissed last year as a Northwest Airlines clerk. He is contesting that dismissal and plans to write a book and pursue an acting career. Their sons, six and two, will live with Mrs Jones, who has bought a ranch house in Cabot, Arkansas, near her mother's home.

WORLD SUMMARY

Pilgrims defy UN air ban

Riyadh: An Iraqi plane carrying 110 Muslim pilgrims ignored a UN embargo and the Western-imposed no-fly zone and landed in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. The Iraqi Airways head said Iraq was planning three flights to the haj pilgrimage this year. *(Reuters)*

Anwar's plea

Kuala Lumpur: Anwar Ibrahim, Malaysia's sacked Finance Minister, asked the judge in his corruption trial to step down, saying he has not had a fair hearing. *(Reuters)*

Cuban jailings

Havana: Cuba risked international human rights wrath by jailing four dissidents — one for five years — for stirring up unrest against the Government of Fidel Castro. *(AP)*

Soft landing

Moscow: Ludmila Mulin drove off a garage's ninth floor as her ex-husband, Gleb, taught her to drive. Both were hurt as the car went through a glass wall to land in trees. *(AP)*

Ex-mayor held

New York: Former Mayor David Dinkins and two congressmen were among 14 people arrested as they protested at last month's fatal police shooting of an unarmed immigrant. *(AP)*

Diplomat hurt

Budapest: Mick Leake, a second secretary at the British Embassy here, is in hospital after being seriously injured in a car accident 60 miles from the Hungarian capital. *(AP)*

Top table dish

Tehran: Iran may end its four-year ban on satellite dishes, but only for "elites" such as artists, professors, journalists and public officials. *(AFP)*

The thrill of knowing

Where is Mombasa? In European Brain Week **John McCrone** explains how the brain surprises us into knowing the answer


TONY STONE

Rapid change: there is a whole cascade of motor and metabolic adjustments whenever we are struck by a surprising event

When we get a joke or a riddle, there is a definite feeling that comes with the moment. A friend might try out a brain-teaser on us, saying that this person went up to bed, turned off the light and slid under the covers. The problem was that the light switch was right across the room, yet he still managed to make it into bed before the room went dark. So how did he do it?

The answer, if you have not guessed, is that it was daylight when he went to bed. But the point is that when we have pondered something for a second and then get the solution, we feel a sudden clap of insight. We do not just see the silly logic of the solution, saying to ourselves in dry computer fashion, "well, yes, that adds up". We feel an emotional jolt, an "*aha!*" of surprise or pleasure. And a similar sharp stab of emotion occurs in many situations, such as when we find a set of door keys we have been looking for, when we suddenly remember yesterday was our mother's birthday, or when a dog dashes out into the road in front of our car. There is a shock that seems to grab our attention and tell us something significant has happened.

> We feel an emotional jolt, an 'aha!' of surprise or pleasure

Aha! feelings come in many different flavours and vary in strength. Some lead to a feeling of elation and delight, as when we hear a funny joke or discover we have won a lottery prize: others can lead to a sinking feeling or even distress, as when we note heavy footsteps coming up behind us on a dark night, or spot a hairy spider on our shirt sleeve.

The scale of an *aha!* can also range from the mildest buzz of interest or familiarity right up to heart-pumping alarm. This variety is confusing, but a big clue about the origins of all such feelings is that they appear tied to the escalation of an event into consciousness. Virtually by definition, the feeling of significance, certainly, recognition, surprise, or alarm are connected to whatever it is that has just caught our attention rather that some background event of which we will not take any further notice.

The feeling seems bound in with an assessment process that leads us eventually to focus on one sensation or thought out of the many that may be swirling on the edges of our minds.

To see how vital a part the *aha!* feeling plays in our mental lives, just try to imagine consciousness without this constant feeling of judgment. It tells us what is important. It even tells us what is familiar and what is novel, or right or wrong. If asked whether Mombasa was in Africa or South Africa, we might find either answer equally plausible unless we had a positive flicker of recognition to tip in the right direction. And the way we know that we don't know an answer is when there is no click of familiarity for either alternative — such as, perhaps, if we were asked whether Mombasa was in Uganda or Kenya, or whether its population was half a million or three million. There is a whole cascade of motor and metabolic adjustments that take place whenever we are struck by a surprising or novel event.

The first thing that happens is almost too obvious to mention: we immediately stop whatever it is that we are doing and glance to bring the event into focus. Yet it is worth noting the implications. The decision to halt and inspect must be made before the event itself has entered full consciousness.

The perhaps tricky disengagement from whatever it was that we had been about to do, and the reorientation of our senses to a new location, must be organised at a reflexive, pre-conscious, level.

This orientation response is a complete, whole body reaction. When we hear a knock at the door or feel an unexpected touch on our shoulder, not only do we automatically stop and turn, we also begin to sweat a little, our mouths go dry, our heart rate and blood pressure increase, extra sugar is released into our circulation, our blood vessels dilate to raise the supply to the muscles and brain, our breathing deepens, and our air passages widen to bring in more oxygen. Our brains go through a process of arousal as well. There is a rapid change in neurotransmitter levels to make us more alert. The orientation response makes sure that we hit the ground running, both physically and mentally.

The link between orientation response and the *aha!* feeling is easy enough to see. As part of orientating to a significant event, or even a significant idea or thought, we experience a rich variety of physical changes.

Our heart may lurch, our stomach heave, our face blanch. There is nothing ethereal about such reactions; they can be measured with voltmeters or blood-pressure gauges. And we will experience them just as directly. So the feeling of knowing that we know — of familiarity and recognition — is a muted version of this orientation reaction. When we ask ourselves if Mombasa is in Kenya, the reason we trust the answer is because of a confirming twinge. It is the only pairing that triggers a slight halting — a catch in our attention — and a just-measurable quickening of the pulse. A pairing with Uganda should draw a metabolic blank — the empty feeling we call unfamiliarity.

● *Extracted from* Going Inside *by John McCrone published by Faber (RRP £20).* Times *readers can order this title only for £17 by calling the Times Bookshop on 0990 329 454.*

Clash over Big Bang



SCIENCE BRIEFING

Nigel Hawkes

PARTICLE physicists spend a lot of taxpayers' money, so they need to prove that the public is getting value for it. But a claim issued recently by Fermilab, the US particle physics laboratory at Batavia, Illinois, has provoked cries of "foul" from Europe's equivalent, the CERN laboratory in Geneva. While the physicists are usually prepared to make common cause in the interests of extracting taxpayers' cash, there are rules to be observed. Among these is not claiming as theirs — at least not too obviously — what somebody else has already discovered.

The row centres on an arcane but vital aspect of how nature behaves. At the Big Bang, equal amounts of matter and antimatter were created, but the Universe as we live in it today consists exclusively of matter. Andrei Sakharov suggested that a subtle difference between particles and antiparticles led, soon after the Big Bang, to a slight excess of particles from which the whole visible Universe has since evolved.

This difference is measurable as a property called charge-parity violation — which amounts to saying that particles and antiparticles do not behave as each other's exact opposites. Providing conclusive evidence of CP violation is therefore important.

Indirect evidence of CP violation in particles called K-mesons (or kaons) was discovered in 1964 by James Cronin and Val Fitch at Brookhaven National Laboratory, Long Island. They won a Nobel prize for their work. Ever since, physicists have been looking for direct evidence as this would help them to distinguish between rival theories of matter.

Earlier this month Fermilab issued a press release announcing that this long-sought evidence was finally at hand. There was "an audible gasp", it was said, when the result was announced by Peter Shawhan of the University of Chicago to a seminar on February 24.

What provoked the gasp was Shawhan giving a measure of the degree of CP-violation by saying: "Our result is that epsilon prime over epsilon equals 28, plus or minus 4.1, times ten to the minus four."

Professor Fitch, now at Princeton, says: "It is a most astonishing result. It is quite unexpected and very interesting."

It was at this moment that physicists at CERN felt that the unwritten rules had been breached. For an experiment there, first reported 11 years ago, had produced a similar value: 23, plus or minus 6.5, times ten to the minus four. CERN issued a statement offering congratulations for the Fermilab data "which confirm with greater precision the earlier result by the NA31 experiment at CERN".

As Konrad Kleinknecht of the University of Mainz told PhysicsWeb, it was "a brilliant confirmation of the earlier observations at CERN, and deserves credit for that". The irony is that Fermilab has long claimed a much smaller value and was now claiming originality by proving themselves wrong and somebody else right. Naughty, naughty.

An insect turn-off



GRASSHOPPERS like lettuce but cannot abide spinach. Like all insects, grasshoppers require a supply of sterols in their diets, which they convert into cholesterol, an essential part of cell membranes. But not all sterols are equal, and the ones in spinach are useless to the grasshopper.

But how does it know? Spencer Behmer and colleagues from the University of Arizona found out by experiment. They fed grasshoppers on spinach and found that it was nothing to do with taste. Naive grasshoppers tucked in enthusiastically, but when offered a second meal of it, they turned their noses up.

The team found, however, that if the grasshoppers were injected with lettuce sterols immediately after the first meal, they went on eating the spinach. But if they were injected with extra spinach sterols, their aversion to the vegetable increased. So it seems, they conclude in the *Journal of Experimental Biology*, that feedback from the stomach soon after a meal is what turns a grasshopper off spinach. Much like a lager lout and a bad curry.

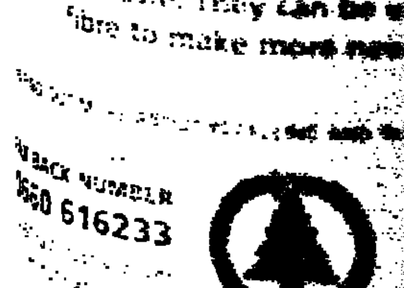
El Niño's good turn



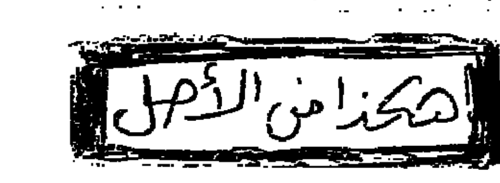
EL NINO, the climatic variation that begins with a warm current off the coast of Peru and turns into a blizzard of headlines about flood, drought and pestilence, has at last done a good turn. A threatened population of fish eagles at Lake Naivasha in Kenya has El Niño to thank for a fresh chance to flourish.

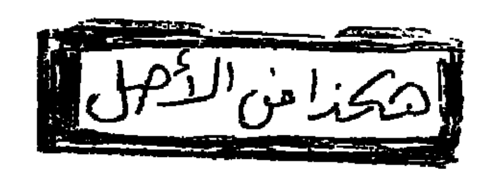
Dr David Harper and Munir Virani of Leicester University told the Earthwatch Convention Day in Oxford last Saturday that the fish eagles at the lake had been in decline. Over the past 15 years numbers had fallen by 50 per cent, and by 1996-97 they had stopped breeding.

This had been blamed on pesticides, but the Leicester scientists found that it was lack of food: the birds were getting barely enough to survive. Then along came El Niño and the heaviest rains in Kenyan history. The lake level rose by three metres, flooding huge areas and providing lots of food for fish and, indirectly, for fish eagles. They began to breed again. The bounty should last a couple of seasons, ensuring the birds' survival for up to ten years.











"I believe we all have our allotted time in this world, and Terry had his. That's how I've come to terms with it," says his widow Diana

I'm not over it yet

In her first interview since Terence Donovan's death, his widow Diana talks to **Noreen Taylor**

Within the marble-effect walls of Diana Donovan's large, white Kensington villa is an air of smooth-running orderliness bordering on perfection. It is a fitting showcase for its owner: slim, tanned, with her hair in an elegant bob, and wearing a minimalist black suit. The scenario seems flawless, but deceptively so — her husband, the photographer Terence Donovan, took his own life in his studio in November 1996.

The sadness in Diana's blue eyes is all too evident as she talks about the man she was married to for 26 years. "I'm afraid I'm still not very good at talking about him," she says, sitting at the table where in times past they enjoyed so many family dinners. "I'm still devastated. I haven't got over it."

The reason she is forcing herself to recall the man she loved so dearly was yesterday's opening — by Lord Puttnam, who first introduced Terence to Diana — of a retrospective exhibition, *The Eye That Never Sleeps*. It features 130 black-and-white prints, a reflection of Donovan's love for London over four decades, but is a fraction of a vast archive of work that Diana has discovered since his death. She estimates that there are a million negatives in storage.

"Going through Terry's work with his archivist has been inspiring. Studying the photographs has brought back so many memories. He loved his work. Never wanted an exhibition, always said he was too busy working. Same as when people asked him about the Sixties. 'I'm busy with the Nineties,' he'd say. 'Let's talk about now'. He got such a thrill from work. Each job was a challenge. I remember driving past a Vodaphone poster with him shouting 'Hey Didi, that's mine'."

We are in her kitchen, looking out on the walled garden: rural bliss in Central London. Terence Donovan had everything, it seemed; everything that we are led to believe will bring personal fulfilment. For the son of an East End lorry driver who embraced judo and Buddhism, and rose to prominence in the Sixties, his achievements were impressive: riches, success, a devoted wife, family, friends. He was adored, says his wife, by all who knew him,


Inspiring: Terence Donovan

from the local dustmen to Diana, Princess of Wales. Yet none of it made his life worth living beyond the age of 60. Why? The question is as hard to form as it is for her to answer, though it is one that she must reflect on constantly.

"I believe we all have our allotted time in this world and Terry had his. That's how I've come to terms with what has happened. Without my faith I don't know how I would have coped. Visiting my local church, sitting somewhere quiet, contemplating, helps the healing process. I don't talk about Terry to anyone. We were private people who opened up only to each other."

When they wed, in 1970, her friends gave the marriage a month. Indeed, Diana St Felix Dare, a convent-educated girl from a colonial Guyanese background, hardly seemed the ideal match for the self-made man still attached to his East End roots. I told Diana that when I interviewed her husband a decade ago he joked about loving the look on people's faces when he introduced them to her: "Very special lady, my wife. She's the backbone of my life, and not at all the sort you would imagine me with."

She laughs at the memory: "It's true. You wouldn't automatically have put us together. But from the start I was fascinated by his acute intelligence. The way he looked at things was unique. He made me laugh, feel safe. Class didn't come into it. He was a gentleman, thoughtful, the kind of man who would be surrounded by women seconds after entering a room. Women loved Terry, loved confiding in him."

Although she would disagree, it does seem that she made sacrifices for him. Donovan's work always came first, and his five-nights-a-week judo sessions were not negotiable either.

"I'd been working as a film publicist when we met, but I gave up work when we had our children. We gave each other room to breathe. I respect the commitment necessary for creative work. I accepted that I would be the one attending the parents' meetings.

"I had my interests. I was always doing some kind of course; whenever we discussed a subject I knew something about, Terry would laugh and say 'I suppose you've done a course on that, too'."

Diana's children, Terry, 27, and Daisy, 24, remain close and have been a great support to Diana: "I don't know how I would have survived without them." Her emotional fragility seems close to the surface as she adds: "Everybody wanted a little piece of Terry. He seemed so accessible to people, made time for them. In that respect he was like Diana." Donovan was one of the Princess of Wales's favourite photographers, and she was a chief mourner at his memorial service. "For someone young enough to be my daughter, she seemed to understand a lot of what I was going through.

"We met through Well Being, one of the charities I worked for. Although I couldn't describe her as one of my closest friends, she was incredibly kind to me and the children after he died."

The giant-sized man has clearly left an enormous gap in her life, an abyss that she has tried to avoid by creating a daily structure that begins with a 6.45am run around Kensington Gardens, and continues with a schedule as packed as that of any corporate executive.

As well as acting as keeper of the Donovan photographic collection — she is working on a book — there are other roles. She chairs the Arts Foundation and the English National Ballet School, finding time also to be a special projects consultant to N M Rothschild. She has had to give up, at least for the moment, the hospice work she began after nursing her mother: "You aren't allowed to work with the dying for two years after you've had a bereavement." She adds: "I don't plan any more. I have a vague picture of what might happen, but I'm just not strong on plans these days."

● The Eye That Never Sleeps, *sponsored by Denton Hall, is at the Museum of London until August 1.*

Escape from fire nine floors up

Thursday: We are sitting in our local Starbucks on Broadway at 102nd St, an Upper West Side hang-out filled with Columbia grad students nursing solitary cappuccinos, when a fire engine honks past. By the time I have finished my decaff latte another seven, accompanied by as many NYPD squad cars, have roared their way up towards the Columbia campus, scattering yellow cabs in their wake. A police helicopter is throbbing ominously above and so, like the Three Kings following the star, we take a detour home and track its position up Broadway until we find ourselves pressed up against NYPD crowd barriers at 107th St. In front of us is a scene that ignites a special fear in the heart of all Manhattan sky-dwellers. A beautiful, rose-bricked, 11-storey apartment building, known locally as the Wedding Cake for its ornate façade, is in flames.

"How did it start?" I ask a fellow gawper. He nods towards a restaurant awning at sidewalk level. "Café Fiesta Mexicana," he says. "I guess their jalapeño peppers got too hot . . ."

As the ladders of the fire-tenders telescope tentatively towards the upper-floor windows, a 20ft fountain of flame spurts from the roof. There are hundreds of firefighters rushing in and out of the building now, and black smoke is churning out of the heat-cracked windows, undeterred by the geysers of water being sprayed. Then a cry goes up from the crowd as a woman appears at a ninth-floor window holding a little bundle.

"It's a baby," screams the woman next to me, aghast. The mother beckons to a fireman who teeters at the very end of his ladder, but even from behind our crowd barrier we can see that the ladder falls tantalisingly about five feet short. Suddenly she drops the little bundle into the wobbling cradle of the fireman's outstretched arms and the crowd gives another unified gasp. He hands it gingerly down to a colleague below him on the ladder and climbs back up. The mother disappears from the window, only to return with *another* baby, who is similarly rescued.

As the fire continues to rage the police push us farther back, and we rush home to watch the drama unfold on cable. The news anchor informs us that 345 firefighters from 79 different units are now on the scene and the blaze is being classified as an eight-alarm fire — each alarm representing a call for further units to attend. It is the highest alarm fire in New York for four years.

Friday: We pore over the papers' coverage of the fire with horror for, like many New Yorkers, we have no fire escape or sprinklers and are uncertain of what to do in a similar emergency. We are appalled to read that it took only 20 minutes for the flames to reach the 11th floor, shooting up a service shaft, skipping several floors and bursting on to the roof before most of the residents knew that anything was wrong. Thirty-three of them ended up in hospital, though the rescued babies, six-week-old twins, were unscathed. But the most disturbing detail was the advice from the fire chief on the scene. Commissioner Von Essen instructed his men to run along each floor, banging on doors and ordering residents to evacuate immediately.

"But that completely contradicts the advice we were given after the Macaulay Culkin fire at Christmas," exclaims Peter. In that case, Culkin's mother evacuated her family from their apartment on 60th Street after a fire broke out in her bedroom. But she failed to close the door behind her and a blaze whipped along the corridor. As the flames vaulted from floor to floor, residents abandoned their apartments and rushed to the stairwell to escape. But four of them never made it and were discovered lying dead, having suffocated from the fumes.

Joanna Coles
NEW YORK LIFE

The following day the fire department gives warning that, in a similar situation, we should not leave our apartments but should stay inside, open our windows and place rolled-up, damp towels under the front door.

Saturday: Our friend Michael calls in a state of some gloom. He and his wife, expecting their first child, are in the process of relinquishing their two-bedroom apartment in Manhattan for a four-bedroom house in Brooklyn. But on Thursday, a block away from their intended new home, Amy Watkins, a 26-year-old student, was stabbed to death walking home from the subway. The NYPD says that she was stabbed in the back with such force that the murder weapon, a kitchen knife, had gone right through her.

The truth is that we have got so used to hearing that New York's murder rate has dropped to its lowest point in 30 years that we have become blasé. But this week the NYPD announces its quarterly crime statistics, which reveal that the murder rate has risen for the first quarter of this year, the first such rise in five years. It's not a vast increase, but it has tempered the buoyancy of New York's renaissance with the spectre of the bad old days when crazed crackheads held the city in fear. Still, we find ourselves rationalising with Michael that the fact the murder is such a big news story here is comforting confirmation of its rarity.

They grip their guns more tightly

A murder has hardened IRA attitudes, says Martin Fletcher

Crossmaglen in South Armagh must be the only town in the United Kingdom that has erected a memorial in its square not to the dead of the two World Wars, but to the dead of the IRA. "Glory to you all, praised and humble heroes, who have willingly suffered for your unselfish and passionate love of Irish freedom," reads the inscription beneath a statue of a youth astride an eagle.

Dozens of soldiers and police have been killed in and around the town during the past 30 years. Crossmaglen is the heartland of militant republicanism and, even before loyalists murdered Rosemary Nelson, the human rights lawyer, on Monday, there was no support there for IRA disarmament.

I had, by coincidence, spent Monday morning taking the pulse of the town. Everyone told me the same thing. The Unionist demand for IRA disarmament was a "stalling device", a "trick". If the IRA complied, the Unionists would simply demand something else. There was no way that they would let Sinn Fein into government.

The town was awash with black and yellow bunting. As President Clinton discusses the decommissioning deadlock with Gerry Adams and David Trimble in the White House today, the Crossmaglen Rangers Irish Football team will be playing Ballina in the all-Ireland final.

"What's happening in Washington is just a sideshow," said Paddy Short, a Crossmaglen publican who is Clare Short's uncle. The match was what mattered to the townsfolk. They had given up on politics. If Mr Adams tried to deliver IRA disarmament, "the Provos would tell him to mind his own business".

The IRA must start to disarm to prevent the collapse of the Good Friday accord, but if hopes of that happening were slim before Mrs Nelson's murder, they were all but shredded afterwards.

The murder, timed to cause maximum damage to the peace process, tapped into the very heart of republican folklore. It reinforced the republicans' perception of themselves as a community besieged by loyalist paramilitaries, aided by the security forces of an oppressive British State. Sinn Fein, hell-bent on securing the Royal Ulster Constabulary's disbandment, shamelessly exploited the murder.

Indeed John O'Dowd, a local Sinn Fein councillor, marched straight up to me when I arrived at the scene, within an hour of the explosion, and unequivocally declared that the RUC was responsible.

There is no evidence to support the Sinn Fein accusation. But the circumstances of the bombing play to republican grievances, and reinforce their determination to keep the weapons they need to "defend" themselves. The manner of Mrs Nelson's death, her unpopularity with the security forces, her role as legal champion of nationalist causes, and revived accusations of collusion between paramilitaries and police, all incline republicans to suspicion.

The bomb that killed Mrs Nelson was far more advanced than the pipebombs previously used by the Red Hand Defenders, the loyalist terrorists who claimed responsibility for the attack. The RUC, it is alleged, had every reason to want Mrs Nelson out of the way. She had, for example, secured the release of Colin Duffy, a prominent republican charged with murdering two policemen in 1997. She had also filed numerous formal complaints of RUC harassment and intimidation against both herself and her clients. The murder was, for republicans, an eerie replay of the killing of Pat Finucane, another prominent solicitor murdered by loyalists in 1989. It is widely believed — rightly or wrongly — that he was set up by the security forces, and 1,000 lawyers signed a petition last month demanding a judicial inquiry into his death.

Compounding this atmosphere of distrust has been the revival of accusations that state forces and paramilitaries have colluded. A former loyalist, Bobby Philpott, claimed last week that the security forces gave him more help to target republicans than he could handle.

Sir Ronnie Flanagan, the RUC Chief Constable, moved swiftly to counter Sinn Fein's allegations by announcing an independent investigation of the murder, but the damage was done. The disarmament deadlock is only a symptom of the deeper problem facing the peace process — the lack of trust between republicans and Unionists. Mrs Nelson's murder has greatly exacerbated that problem.

> The RUC had every reason to want Mrs Nelson out of the way

For disarmament to take place republicans have to believe that Unionists genuinely want to reach an accommodation with nationalism, but Mrs Nelson's killing will fuel republican suspicions that Northern Ireland remains a Protestant State for a Protestant people. For Unionists to admit Sinn Fein to government they have to believe republicans are committed to democracy, but they will hardly be encouraged by its leaders' demagoguery.

There will be little to celebrate at today's St Patrick's Day festivities in Washington. Mr Clinton will exercise his legendary powers of persuasion on Mr Adams and Mr Trimble, and the party leaders will fly home for a final fortnight of frantic talks before this Good Friday's government-imposed deadline.

Right now, it is impossible to see how the deadlock can be broken. Making predictions in Northern Ireland is, however, a notoriously foolish occupation. If the peace process has shown anything, it is the Province's extraordinary capacity not only for wrecking its achievements, but also for recoiling at the last second from the brink of the abyss. Yet, on this St Patrick's Day, there are few in the republican heartland, or beyond who are inclined to be hopeful.

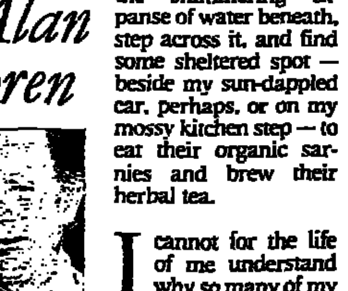
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JACQUES THE JOKER, THE QUEEN OF SLEAZE AND A HOUSE OF CARDS.

Derail the gravy train

The Commission has taken Europe for a ride, now it must be abolished



Simon Jenkins

So did you laugh or cry yesterday when you heard that the European Commission had resigned? Did you stab your sausage with a shout of joy, or did you gaze mournfully at a limp cornflake? In short, were you smug or sad as the courtiers had a bad attack of nose-bleed on the royal road of history?

It rather depends on what you think happened. What was significant on Monday night was not that the Commission resigned. It was that Edith Cresson and Jacques Santer did not resign, despite being accused of corruption, nepotism and maladministration in a report that they had commissioned to save their skins. Because they refused to resign, the other commissioners knew that they would all be voted out by the European Parliament. Since they would then find it harder to regain their jobs, they thought it best to tiptoe immediately from the banquet, in the hope that they could more easily tiptoe back.

Those of us who have long been sceptical of the European Commission and all its doings can be allowed a brief cry of triumph. Those who plagued Brussels with tales of corruption and who protested over its waste, nepotism, inertia and bureaucratic flatulence can say a simple hurrah. Sections of the Brussels document make Whitehall's Scott and Macpherson reports read like Enid Blyton: directorate after directorate is depicted in terms more appropriate to the East Side Mob. The section on the Greek-run Tourism Directorate needs an X certificate. These were the people who accused any critic of being "anti-European", a little Englander, an offshore islander. They said we had missed the train, had no European vision, could not see the big picture.

What garbage. Let nobody ever again — *ever* — attack those who for years questioned the bland assertions of unelected and unaccountable Eurocrats. All was well at Brussels, said the Berlaymont bandits, or not *too* bad, or not as bad as Westminster, or not as bad as the United Nations. For decades they rejected all criticism of the fraudulent use of farm subsidies, regional grants and aid contracts, and the edifice of private "consultancies". Go to any Third World aid project and ask which is the least efficient and most corrupt: the answer is always the European Union's. See any unnecessary European road or grain silo or half-built tenement and it is probably the EU's. The snouts were raised from the trough only long enough to cry "Xenophobe!"

The British and Scandinavian participants in these shenanigans claim to have been a restraining hand. We must believe it. In contrast, France was still claiming on Monday night that Mme Cresson had done nothing wrong. In these matters, Paris, Madrid, Lisbon and Rome inhabit a separate moral realm. They make good football teams, tenors, pasta and love, but the report depicts them as incurably bad administrators. Those who can see nothing wrong in defrauding taxpayers should never be trusted with other people's money, let alone their social, regional and currency policy.

Brussels yesterday vanished under a mountain of self-exculpatory spin. The incident was the "coming of age" of European democracy. It was an opportunity for "ruthless action to root out corruption". I even heard the hilarious excuse, from a British Commissioner, that the Commission's problem was to be overworked and understaffed. Most of Brussels operates to a schedule that makes Nero seem a workaholic. But the gist of the argument is that Europe has somehow been purged and its institutions made more democratic.

This is a fallacy. First we should note how the crisis began. It was not the Commission seeking to set its house in order. Nor was it the auditors, who have been reporting frauds for years. Nor was it the Parliament, which last month voted itself an expenses regime that would send an English district councillor to jail. True, the Parliament had after twenty years finally had the guts to demand a report on corruption, on pain of censuring the Commission. But the whistle was blown only after the press had taken up the cause of an auditor whom the Commission was persecuting for revealing its frauds. The media rammed his message down the throats of enough MEPs.

The Union's apologists say that this proves the virtue of stronger parliamentary control, to fill the Commission's famous democratic chasm. It does no such thing. International bodies such as the European Commission are unreformable. Half the trouble in Brussels, as at the UN, is the practice of allocating jobs and contracts by national quotas, not merit. Nor is the European Parliament appropriate as an auditing agent. It is not the fount of sovereignty for European government. That role is performed by the Council of Ministers. Since the Parliament does not raise taxes, it has no interest in cutting spending. It is a European House of Lords, a rest-home for sidelined politicians.

At such moments there is no avoiding a reprise of first principles. Yes, there is a role for European co-operation. It is primarily in resolving the classic area of non-military conflict between nation states, which is trade. Such co-operation must be subject to treaty and its structure must be strictly tailored to its purpose. Fair trade cannot become a Trojan horse through which supranationalism meddles in every detail of a nation's political economy.

Such co-operation is most effectively engineered through the Council of Ministers and its secretariat. This peripatetic Field of Cloth of Gold may be cumbersome, messy, loud and often ludicrous. Yet it is real, composed of elected, serving politicians. It is Europe's true confederal authority. It is the Council of Ministers that must sooner of later pick up the shambles to which Brussels diplomacy has reduced European farming over the past three decades.

By comparison, the Commission is an eerie being, secretive and self-important. It can take aboard auditors galore. It can flatter the Parliament with question times and reports. It can even half-resign from time to time, much as Henry II took up the scourge. But it will make no difference. The Commission is a bureaucratic entity that does not mirror a political one. It can perpetuate but not legitimate itself. As Europe widens, it also fragments. The euro may prove to be the last cry of the postwar settlement.

To read yesterday's Brussels document is to wander to a land a thousand miles from Britain. Its inhabitants seem detached from the political cultures they supposedly serve and on whose taxes they depend, a world of ceaseless conferences, projects and programmes, of consultancies, agencies, trips and backhanders. These international bodies are like the pre-Reformation episcopacy. Safe in their comfortable sinecures, they can rely on a cosmopolitan priesthood to whom they offer a plausible mission statement, first-class travel and no great burden of work beyond proselytising the cause. Nobody ever abolishes them.

National governments, for all their imperfection, are the proper focus for European co-operation. The Council of Ministers is their club. The Council should have no need for supranational bodies such as a European Commission or Parliament. I do not believe there is any popular demand to establish a truly potent supranational government of Europe. The French, Spanish and Germans are no more eager than the British to submerge their national interest in a new supranationalism. They may be more canny in pursuing that interest in the counsels of Europe. That is quite different. Mme Cresson, a true European? It is a joke.

A whistle-blower has stopped this particular train in its tracks. Today it stands puffing and blowing off steam while the crew argues on the platform. But until someone has the courage to admit that international bodies can sometimes outlive their usefulness, it will not be stopping for long. The sceptics have had their moment of joy.

comment@the-times.co.uk

THE TIMES DIARY

Gallery search

THE huge Nazi art scandal that hit the National Gallery is set to engulf the Tate: Sir Nicholas Serota, its Jewish director, has appointed a team of experts to examine the provenance of his collection, fearing that up to 700 works "could potentially bring problems".

As head of a cross-gallery working group into "tainted art", Serota (below) feels obliged to rummage in his own cupboard: toilers are sweating through his 61,000-strong collection — which includes daubs by Picasso, Matisse and Sargent — to check for looted works. "Only a few hundred at most could cause difficulty", I am assured.



PENGUIN-exporting is the latest regal money-spinner. Lord Harewood, the Queen's cousin, is packing 12 of the sea sorts off to Shanghai. Harewood House Bird Garden has signed a replacement: a mynah bird, who can do "very good impressions of fire engines".

■ DOUGLAS HOGG has found the solution to the dilemma that so dented papa's career: he intends to remain in the Commons *and* inherit the Viscountcy of Hailsham.

As part of his failed attempt to become PM, Quintin Hogg disclaimed his title as the 2nd Viscount in 1963 so that he could return to the Commons. He was given a life peerage seven years later, becoming Lord Hailsham of Saint Marylebone. Anthony King, constitutional expert, says: "You can't stop someone using a title. It's a jolly outcome." Will Baroness Hogg, Douglas's wife and the head of John Major's policy unit, start calling herself Viscountess?

THE Diary tip for Cheltenham, courtesy of Michael Howard, who now has more time to spend with his tick-tack: Teeton Mill for the Gold Cup; Norman Williamson for the jockeys' championship.





■ PAUL BURRELL is carrying on his mistress's good work by tending to Paul Michael Glaser — Starsky to David Soul's Hutch. The loyal butler to Diana, Princess of Wales, will meet Glaser next week: the actor was comforted by the Princess after his wife and daughter died of Aids. "I grew up with Starsky and Hutch," says Burrell, who, faintly surreally, shared a table with Antonio "Huggy Bear" Fargas and Soul at Grosvenor House.

THE air will fill with light chatter about the Blackwell Tunnel digging works at Scotts when the manager has a hundred taxi drivers in the back of his restaurant: this is to celebrate its inclusion in the Knowledge, the only joint to be so honoured.

■ UNIONS are to make ministers pay Millennium Dome workers fat wages — for the inconvenience of seeing in the new epoch. After 90 performers were chosen for the millenarial shows, Equity is demanding special rates and TV rights. The New Millennium Dome Experience Company is cross: "You can't compare performers to waiters getting £1,000 on the millennium. It's fairly clear the jobs entail working on New Year's Eve."

HAVING rallied his troops to "break free from the past", William Hague supped with Sir Edward Heath.

■ THAT champion of good causes, Mohamed Al Fayed, wants to launch an anti-smoking campaign. Inspired by Rory Bremner's impersonation, Mo wants to appear in adverts with the inscription "fug fags". ASH is now asking Mo to fund a legal campaign against British tobacco companies.

JASPER GERARD

'I cannot wait to welcome the first stout-booted green anorak who clambers enthusiastically over my garden fence'

Alan Coren

This is a big morning for me. It is as big a morning as I have seen in 40 years, it is a morning that stands poised to change the entire course of my life, because, having spent those four decades searching for a style with a y, I suddenly find myself searching for a stile with an i. Two stiles, in fact — one for my eastern fence, one for my western.

Now, you will say: hang about, that is a bit pretentious even for him, his fences should be called left and right, they are only 50ft apart, you do not need map co-ordinates for a suburban garden, a Cricklewood lawn does not call for a compass, you can distinguish between his herbaceous borders without a sextant, but you are wrong.

Any minute now, people will be tramping down my road with Ordnance Survey Sheet No 176 and they will be serious people, they will have stout boots, they will have sturdy sticks, they will have woolly hats, they will have lumpy knapsacks, and they will be thinking in terms not of left and right but of east and west, for that is the kind of serious people they are.

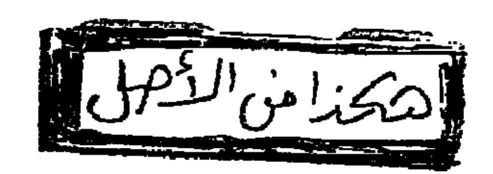
And you may be sure they will not take it at all kindly if, having gone to all the trouble of navigating by the stars and working out my longitude to three decimal points to get to my eastern or my western fence, they then find that they cannot climb over it. They will very likely start kicking it with their stout boots, or banging their sturdy sticks on it, or, at the very least, poking their woolly-hatted heads over it and shouting "Oy!", and that is the last thing I want. Which is why the first thing I want is a pair of stiles, set in my two fences so that serious people can climb over them.

Because, thanks to the generosity of our great Environment Secretary, they will any minute now have the Right To Roam, and it is incumbent upon each and every one of us to be ready for them. Indeed, to welcome them with open arms, for they are paying us a very great compliment in wanting to ramble across our premises: they have waited a long time to see my daffodil fluttering and dancing in the breeze, to have a squint inside my lovely shed, to feel the hoe, sketch the shears, sniff the Paraquat, to take one another's photographs leaning on my rustic Homebase bench, climb to the top of my towering rockery from which it is possible, on a clear day, to see three major roads, and, scrambling down to the shimmering expanse of water beneath, step across it, and find some sheltered spot — beside my sun-dappled car, perhaps, or on my mossy kitchen step — to eat their organic sarnies and brew their herbal tea.

I cannot for the life of me understand why so many of my fellow landowners were so enraged at the announcement of the proposed legislation, so fearful of the imminent incursions of the wandering nerd, so desperate to hurl themselves into the battle to exclude him. For myself, I cannot wait for the first green anorak to clamber over my fence, mistake me for the gardener, and, chucklingly set straight on the matter, whip out his ring-bound notebook and rain-proof pen and begin keenly to quiz me on local lore.

How I long to point out the rutted bit of lawn which stands as undisputed evidence of where the extinct Crickle once flowed, through the boar-packed wood of which my gnarled acacia is the sole survivor! How I yearn to take his arm and lead him to the sacred site, possibly by the dustbins, maybe behind the garage, where rumour has it that woaded Corens fought to the last man to thwart Caesar's march on Hendon! How I relish the thought of filling him in on the restless ghosts of drawn and quartered highwaymen who, having once lurked beside my compost heap to plague the Edgware Stage, now cry "Stand and deliver!" every Martinmas Eve. I may even take them up to the Big House to show them the unique systems of plumbing and pointing and guttering and drive-laying created, just for me, by generations of itinerant artists who brought to Cricklewood the arcane techniques honed to perfection on the bothies of Limerick.

I may start doing cream teas. I may take a correspondence course in morris dancing. I may embark upon the felt-tip monogramming of souvenir items in lustrous Crickleware from Bhs, or bottling zesty relishes and acne remedies distilled from my own conkers, or stringing chic necklaces of interesting local pebbles, and set up Ye Olde Estate Suitcase, by the gate, to sell them. Aha, you cry, so that is the truth of it, he supports the Right To Roam because he sees a bob or two in it, but you are wrong. I support it because, for those 40 long years, I have been only a mere householder. But today, thanks to Michael Meacher, I am a landowner.





GET OUT, STAY OUT

For any Commissioners to keep their jobs is illegal and wrong

The European Union today presents a *sobering spectacle*. Its untested currency has, with good reason, yet to win the faith of the markets. Unemployment higher than at any time since the 1930s is a standing reproach to its political class; Germany, its anchor economy, is politically as well as economically adrift; and failures to tackle structural reform are making the EU a high-cost, low-growth drag on the world economy. Trade wars with the United States go unresolved; and enlargement, Europe's great strategic imperative, is being held hostage to endless quarrels over controlling the EU's spending and cleaning up pork-barrel regional and structural funds and the indefensibly spendthrift common agricultural policy.

The EU's supranational institutions, thrust naked this week into the limelight, are in no better shape. The incompetence, cronyism, fraud and sharp practice that have long riddled the European Commission, publicly chronicled year after year by the EU's Court of Auditors in reports left to gather dust, have led only now — and only in the certainty that the Commission would otherwise be sacked by the European Parliament — to the collective resignation *of the its President*, Jacques Santer, and the entire complacent, arrogant and mostly second-rate team selected, let it not be forgotten, by EU governments.

As for the Parliament, the triumphalist claims of MEPs to have struck a great blow for probity and democracy — conveniently, and not coincidentally, on the eve of facing their electorates — would be more credible were they *not famously* passengers on their own rich gravy train of excessive perks and fiddled expenses. And Pauline Green, the leader of its Socialist Group, has not so much discovered virtue but had it thrust upon her. Last December, when she tabled a motion of censure against the whole Commission while whipping her group to vote against it, her aim was to defeat the *critics and protect the Commission's back*. Only because some German and other north European Socialists broke ranks to side with a reforming minority did her tactic misfire, forcing Mr Santer to agree to the independent inquiry which issued its first report on Monday.

In limpid language, whose meaning no bureaucrat *can twist, these four* wise men and one wise woman delivered, to their great credit, a coruscating indictment *not just of individual commissioners*, but of the entire management and corporate culture of the European Commission. They have made an incontestable case, in Tony Blair's words, for "root and branch reform". Will this finally happen? Not if governments, while talking grandly about Europe's great opportunity for "renewal", see no more evil in Brussels than is politically expedient. Not unless they change the management — the entire management — forthwith. Not unless they insist on credible systems to hold commissioners and bureaucrats to account. And not unless they appoint a new team with a brief not just to root out malpractices but to shut down entire programmes, such as tourism and humanitarian aid, which the Commission is incompetent to manage and which should never have been added to its ever-expanding empire. What is needed is a cultural revolution as fundamental as that imposed by the Trevelyan reforms on the British Army after the Crimean War.

Nothing is less certain. The suicide ritual was barely ended before this undead Commission rose unrepentant to its feet, with even Edith Cresson saying that she had no need to clear her name because the Commission was collectively responsible. Mr Santer had the gall to "note with considerable satisfaction that I am whiter than white", to make a bid to stay on himself and to insist that the entire commission could be "*renominated*". The independent experts observed: "The temptation to deprive the concept of responsibility of all substance is a dangerous one." To that temptation, the commissioners and most EU governments seem ready to yield.

This supposedly cathartic drama could end up as a "Japanese" purge, in which heads roll only to ensure that things continue much as before, with much the same discredited cast. That would be an outrage.

The German Government is thinking along these lines. It has called on the whole team to stay on as caretakers and is thinking in terms of a "new" interim Commission drawn mainly from the *current 19 commissioners, to serve out this* year. Mr Blair has demanded Mr Santer's head; but he has discredited himself as a reformer by insisting that Sir Leon Brittan and Neil Kinnock, the two British Commissioners, be reappointed. This special pleading will prompt other governments to say that their commissioners too should stay: none will want to admit that "their" people are more bent than others.

To reappoint them would be illegal under the Treaty on European Union. Article 159 states categorically not only that a resigning Commission President must be "replaced"; it says that "the duties of a member of the Commission shall end when he resigns. . .the vacancy thus caused shall be filled for the remainder of the member's term of office by a new member". In Brussels and EU capitals, lawyers are citing the more ambiguous Articles 144 and 158 as a justification for reappointing Commissioners. But these articles deal with a parliamentary vote of censure; since none took place, they are irrelevant to the case.

Sir Leon and Mr Kinnock did not have to resign; they did so as part of a collective manoeuvre to shield others, including Mr Santer, from taking individual responsibility. They must accept the consequences of theat choice, and go; just as Mr Blair should be insisting, as did William Hague yesterday, that Mr Santer and other commissioners faulted by the inquiry should clear their desks at once. Brussels *can function* with a *skeleton* caretaker team, which in any event should serve for no more than a few more weeks.

Only if the Council of Ministers upholds the treaties and sweeps the table bare can they credibly claim to address, under new management, the agenda for reform. This should not be the partisan affair that Mr Blair, in his contemptuous treatment of Mr *Hague's pertinent proposals in the Commons* yesterday, made of it. Mr Blair has some good *ideas*, notably the need to establish individual accountability right through the bureaucracy, and to prevent improper uses of consultants and outside contractors. But he should have welcomed, rather than jeered at, the practical thinking on the Opposition benches.

Mr Hague is right that commissioners should abide by a clear code of ministerial responsibility, and that powers must be created to dismiss them individually for fraud or maladministration. He is right about the need for binding codes of conduct covering the appointment of senior Brussels bureaucrats, ending the commissioners' corrupt habit of "parachuting" former MEPs and cronies from their personal cabinets into lucrative Commission posts. He is right that Mr Blair's ideas about financial auditing do not go far enough and that the independence of a new anti-fraud unit must be guaranteed by having it report direct to the Council of Ministers. He is right that the solution to the Commission's plea that it does not have enough staff is to shrink its ever-expanding role by returning the administration of some programmes to national control.

There is no precedent for this crisis. That is where the "opportunity" that Mr Blair perceives resides. But he seems chiefly nervous that the "sad catalogue of negligence and mismanagement", which has not so much been revealed as finally thrust under the public's nose, will be "another *chance to bash Europe*". It is nothing of the kind. But timidity and half-measures on his part, at this critical point, could make his fears come true. For Europe's sake, Mr Blair will have face the necessity of offending some of his European friends.

FIFTY-EIGHT DAYS TO DIE

The terrible case of Mary Ormerod

The allegations surrounding the death of 85-year-old Mary Ormerod provoke the deepest disquiet. Her doctor, Ken Taylor, is charged with "serious professional misconduct". Those three words camouflage the severity of the accusation — that he departed from the standards expected of healers to hasten her passing. "I did not kill" Mrs Ormerod, he claims. But the fear that he unethically accelerated nature's course lingers, disturbingly. And so does the need better to guide doctors through the moral and medical dilemmas which govern the passage from painful illness to easeful death.

Mrs Ormerod had suffered seven strokes and had senile dementia and mild Parkinson's disease diagnosed. The nurses claim that Dr Taylor ordered them to stop giving her a food supplement, and that they protested. Mrs Ormerod, it appears, was not in a permanent vegetative state. She was not being fed artificially, but could swallow food injected into her *mouth*. The hearing was told that Dr Taylor's medical notes did not suggest her condition was deteriorating. Fifty-eight days after the order to withdraw her food, Mrs Ormerod died. The inquest recorded the cause as broncho-pneumonia, brought on by malnutrition. Dr Taylor hoped that, by his witholding food, his patient would simply "slip away". This act took him into a legal no man's land in which the guidance for treating patients is extremely vague. Had she been in a persistent vegetative state, Dr Taylor would have needed to refer her case to the courts before denying her nutrition.

Yet Dr Taylor claims that continuing to feed Mrs Ormerod was, in his mind, "inappropriate" and "inhumane", while his actions were "ethical and appropriate". He admits that he did not seek a second opinion before pursuing his treatment, in spite of nurses allegedly disagreeing with him. If his actions were "appropriate", why did Dr Taylor purportedly need to be persuaded to record his sudden change of treatment in the medical notes?

Even if the General Medical Council were to find Dr Taylor guilty as charged, he has already escaped a worse fate. A potential prosecution for murder was dropped, apparently for want of evidence. That such a pass was reached illustrates the pressing need for the British Medical Association to issue clear advice for treatment of patients like Mrs Ormerod. Doctors need a better compass to guide them through this moral minefield.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

'Scandal and incompetence' of EU Commissioners

From Mr Malcolm Hill

Sir, Your leader today refers to the culture of corruption which has afflicted the EU since the 1950s.

Before damning individuals or the low standards of public administration in Spain and France, let it be remembered that the Council of Ministers is responsible for the growth of this culture. They have created policies of discredited protectionism and endorsed regulations of such silliness and complexity, that corruption on a vast scale has been unloosed in many fields: notably agriculture, fish, the single market and three fixed-currency regimes.

The belief that only a few individuals are tainted in the present exposure is ridiculous.

Yours faithfully,
MALCOLM HILL,
58a Abingdon Road, W8 6AP.
March 16.

From Mr F. W. J. Whetstone

Sir, By resigning en bloc the European Commissioners have taken the only sensible course in view of the refusal of Edith Cresson and perhaps other named Commissioners to resign.

However, senior Labour and Conservative politicians are in danger of undermining the whole reform programme. By calling for the retention of the blameless British Commissioners, a step which the Germans will, I am sure, follow, it will become a matter of French and Spanish pride that their two (each) Commissioners will be reinstated. If that happens little or nothing would be achieved.

Hard though it may be, Sir Leon Brittan and Neil Kinnock must allow their resignations to stand, if for no other purpose than to show that there is some honour left in British politics, and, after all, there must be some corporate responsibility.

The Government and the Conservatives must get together and reverse their "shoot from the hip" policy, or cynicism about politicians will become even greater than it is at present.

I am, your obedient servant,
F. W. J. WHETSTONE,
Bassets Manor,
Hartfield, Sussex TN7 4LA.
March 16.

From Professor Ian Markham

Sir, In amongst the scandal and incompetence of the European Commission, we now have the best argument in favour of the European Union. A democratically elected Parliament held a corrupt Executive to account forcing it to resign: a model of democratic practice.

Sincerely,
IAN MARKHAM,
Liverpool Hope University College,
Hope Park, Liverpool L16 9JT.
March 16.

From Mr Colin Bullen

Sir, The exposure of the corruption and incompetence at the heart of the European Union is a vindication of those who have long opposed UK involvement in the whole project. However, this is far more than a matter of a few individuals, to be solved by a replacement of personnel. It results from the nature of the EU itself.

Now is the time to begin constructive disengagement from the EU, the end of which will see us remain friendly trading partners of European nations, but without the need to sacrifice all that we have built over the centuries.

Yours faithfully,
C. R. BULLEN
(Member, NEC, Campaign for an Independent Britain),
119 Douglas Road,
Tonbridge, Kent TN9 2UE.
March 16.

From Mrs Jane Miller

Sir, Surely the collapse of the Commission is just another nail in the EU coffin. Whatever we may think of Hague, at least he is giving the Euro*realists* a choice.

Yours faithfully,
JANE MILLER,
2 Adlam Buildings,
Salisbury SP2 7SA.
March 16.

From Mr Michael Hatch

Sir, Events in Brussels may prove to be a vital step in reforming the culture of dishonesty that has so long prevailed there; but who will carry out *the reform?*

MEPs have recently *shown their* determination to keep in place the institutionalised fraud whereby they receive payment for fictional expenses. It must be for the Governments of individual member states to seize the initiative if we voters are to have any confidence in the EU.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL HATCH,
Hilly Meadows,
Mortimer West End,
Reading, Berkshire RG7 2AD.
March 16.

From Mrs Marina Oliver

Sir, Should we be surprised? Most EU Commissioners were politicians, and politics requires a loud mouth and the ability to talk fast — not qualifications for competent administration.

Mismanagement is inevitable in any large organisation if the managers' appointments are for political services rendered or to sideline a political embarrassment, instead of for proven ability.

Yours faithfully,
MARINA OLIVER,
Half Hidden, West Lane,
Bledlow, Princes Risborough,
Buckinghamshire HP27 9PF.
marina.oliver@virgin.net
March 16.

From Mr Michael Forrest

Sir, As the European Commission clearly cannot organise a whelk stall it should surely not be left in charge of fishing regulations.

Yours sincerely,
MICHAEL FORREST,
Appletree, Thames Street,
Sonning, Reading RG4 6UR.
mlnfl@sonning.demon.co.uk
March 16.

From Mr Paul Asbury

Sir, Now that the EU Commissioners have quit, they should all be available to the International Olympic Committee on a full-time basis.

Yours etc,
PAUL ASBURY,
39 Belclare Street, The Gap,
4061 Queensland, Australia.
asburypaul@netscape.net
March 16.

The ever closer union

From Miss Dorothy Harris

Sir, Three cheers for the forthright article by Peter Shore which highlights some aspects of the true nature of the European Union ("Who are you *kidding, Mr Blair?*", March 8).

This is a much more realistic view than that portrayed by Mary Ann Sieghart (article, March 5). She seemed to believe that this country can be in the EU and remain free to choose what we take from it. The Maastricht treaty will not allow a two-tier Europe — "ever closer union" is the ultimate objective, and our fellow Europeans make no secret of that.

Ms Sieghart believes that Britain will be able to veto and resist, for instance, "endless proposals for 'harmonisation' ". In the Europe to which we unfortunately belong, such matters are not proposed and then debated and withstood. Decisions of the European Court of Justice show quite clearly how tax harmonisation or any other European matter will come about. The recent decision in *ICI v Colmar* demonstrates how any European country can go to the court and challenge UK tax laws as being in opposition to the single market, and this country has then to comply. There will be nothing Tony Blair or any prime minister can do about it.

The EU is not democratic. All the laws we have to implement here come *from 20 unelected people — the* Commissioners. The Parliament, like the old Soviet one, is a sop.

When will people realise just what has happened to this country and its much vaunted freedoms, won over the centuries at such great cost?

Yours faithfully,
DOROTHY HARRIS,
Pot Hill House, Dial Post,
Horsham, West Sussex RH13 8NX.
March 9.

The Bulger case

From Mr Roddy Gye

Sir, At the time of their conviction and sentencing, I argued through your columns (letter, December 2, 1993) for compassion for James Bulger's young killers. I was rewarded with an anonymous telephone call advising me to "try telling that to the Bulger family".

Of the various intents of a custodial sentence — containment, deterrence, rehabilitation — retribution is the least edifying in a civilised society. In the case of child criminals it should be unconscionable.

The Bulger family, in their continuing grief, should seek no comfort in the destruction of two more young lives. Nor, on the matter of sentencing, should the judiciary in Britain or Europe be swayed by the opinions of victims or their families, in the style of the Sharia courts. The criminal law serves and protects society as a whole, victims and culprits alike, and should be administered with dispassion.

Yours faithfully,
RODDY GYE,
9 Orlando Road, SW4 0LE.
March 16.

Questions for Hague on the euro

From Sir Julian Critchley

Sir, Could I through you put some questions about the euro to Mr William Hague? What is the point of *trying to maintain* that the *EU* is merely a grouping of sovereign states when the treaties on which it is based clearly endow it and its institutions with an element of supranationality?

What is the point of accusing continental politicians of wanting to abolish their own countries and create "a federal European superstate"? If this were true none of them would be *re-elected and the East Europeans* who have escaped from just such a superstate would not be queueing up to join.

If the future of Europe as laid down at Maastricht is so unattractive why have three Efta states, Austria, Sweden and Finland, since joined, and also signed the Amsterdam treaty?

How do you think you are going to influence our allies and the Brussels Establishment by being negative, destructive and confrontational?

Have you ever wondered why the swings against Michael Portillo and Norman Lamont were well above average at the 1997 election?

Why did you demand a referendum on the Amsterdam treaty while opposing one on devolution? Both had constitutional implications.

Now that the Asian "tigers" have succumbed to cat 'flu, what new extra-European undertaking are you seeking to promote? A North Atlantic Free Trade Area?

If, as you make out, the continentals are so uncompetitive, how is it that over half the cars on our roads are made on the Continent? Over half our lorries come from Germany and Sweden, two countries with allegedly the highest social costs in the world. And how is it that the Germans export twice what we do, that Ford is transferring more and more car production from the UK to the Continent, and that BMW is to rescue Rover and not the other way around?

When it comes to fishing you say you wish to renegotiate the common fisheries policy (CFP) in order to take back so-called British waters. Have you calculated how much compensation you would be required to pay? More than enough to negate the British budget rebate, surely? Moreover, if the CFP is as disastrous as you make out can you explain why we sell £250 million of fish to France alone each year? Or why Cornish fishermen export 90 per cent of their catch to Spain, and the Tories failed to hold both St Ives and Lowestoft at the last election?

Is it not high time you told the party the truth about Europe?

Yours etc,
JULIAN CRITCHLEY
(Conservative MP,
1959-64 and 1970-97),
19 Broad Street, Ludlow SY8 1NG.
March 11.

Birkenhead and Scouse

From His Honour Judge John Morgan

Sir, Edward Grayson (letter, March 11) is a leading authority on sport and the law but his knowledge of accents north of Watford leaves much to be desired.

F. E. Smith, that great luminary of the Northern Circuit, whose lifesize portrait hangs proudly in the judges' library here in Liverpool, was born and bred in Birkenhead, a twopenny ferryboat ride from the Liver Birds. *His accent*, which *C. B. Fry purported* to recall from his Wadham days, would have been as far removed from Gracie Fields's Rochdale as Geoff Boycott's is from Billy Connolly's. But then Fry only ever came north to score the odd century at Old Trafford and would know no better.

The unique quality of the accent Beryl Bainbridge discarded so early is said to derive from the draught from the Mersey Tunnel getting up sensitive Liverpool noses.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN MORGAN,
Queen Elizabeth II Law Courts,
Derby Square, Liverpool L2 1XA.
john.morgan11@virgin.net
March 12.

Business letters, page 29

**Letters for publication may be faxed to 0171-782 5046.
e-mail to:** ***letters@the-times.co.uk***

Russian debt

From Professor A. Kennaway

Sir, You report (March 9) that the International Monetary Fund contemplates paying £10.8 billion in order to allow Russia to repay its foreign debts. Note that the money would not benefit the Russian economy.

What is the virtue of giving Western money to repay Western debtors? If indeed the IMF is the guarantor of those debts, why should the money not be paid directly, thus avoiding a circular route via banks of dubious *competence with inevitable deductions* of commissions and diversions into pockets and purposes other than those intended? Alternatively, why not postpone repayment or cancel the debts?

Would it not be better for Russia finally to face economic realities and set about creating financial and economic conditions that would allow it to become, however slowly, self-sufficient, and to invite foreign investment to be used only in projects that would create real wealth for the internal economy? Surely we have enough experience of the uselessness of these gifts made under political duress?

Moscow is plastered with posters: "No one but we Russians will save Russia." True, our money will not help them.

Yours faithfully,
A. KENNAWAY,
RMA Sandhurst,
Camberley, Surrey GU15 4PQ.
March 10.

Linking race and ability in schools

From Mr Ray Ward

Sir, George Bridges's excellent article, "Playgrounds for political correctness" (March 12), is somewhat marred by his dismissal of the premise that colour and ability are linked followed by his statement that the performance of Indian, Chinese and other Asian pupils (carefully not mentioning other racial groups) continues to outstrip white children.

Doesn't that imply that colour — or at any rate race — and ability *are* linked?

Yours faithfully,
RAY WARD,
Flat 97,
17 Sheppard Drive, SE16 3EJ.
March 12.

From Mrs Marion Leeper

Sir, I was appalled by the complacency of George Bridges's article suggesting that multicultural education was nothing more than unnecessary political correctness. He suggests that being colour-blind is good enough: that teachers should stick to maths and English and that moral and social education is none of their business.

Many teachers are seriously trying to confront racism and develop an education fit for a multicultural society. To be told that we should stick to worrying about league tables and exam results and forget about the education of the whole child does not help us.

Children today are bound to meet people with different skin colours, cultures and religions. They have to learn that it is good to be different: that other cultures, as well as their own, are exciting, valuable and worth respecting.

I wish Mr Bridges could have seen the expression of joy on the face of the Japanese boy in my class when I introduced a *topic* on Japan, and seen the children learning about difference in its most practical form as they tasted sushi for the first time, wrote haiku poetry, played with chopsticks and origami.

This is not being politically correct: it is valuable learning, it is fun, and it may even improve our league-table performance

Yours sincerely,
MARION LEEPER
(Primary school teacher),
The Old Vicarage,
4 Stretten Avenue,
Cambridge CB4 3EP.
March 13.

From Mr Michael Austin

Sir, Ofsted's own figures (report, March 11) show a school exclusion rate of 160 per 1,000 for black Caribbean pupils and 5 per 1,000 for Chinese. It is inconceivable to me that such a huge disparity could be accounted for by teachers' alleged racial prejudices, unwitting or otherwise.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL AUSTIN,
10 Blagdon Close,
Crediton, Devon EX17 1EL.
March 12.

From Mr John Whittle

Sir, If our education system is institutionally biased against certain ethnic groups, it follows with inescapable logic that it is also biased in favour of Chinese pupils.

I believe the safest assumption to make about any "official" statements on racism is, where these are not utter nonsense, they may simply be untrue.

Yours,
JOHN WHITTLE,
185 Garstang Road,
Preston PR2 8JQ.
jvpw@talk21.com
March 12.

Princes in the Tower

From Mrs Fabienne Smith

Sir, Your Diary (March 13) reports that Prince Edward's firm, Ardent, wants to exhume the two Princes in the Tower from their resting place in Westminster Abbey. This has already been done, in 1933.

In 1987 you reported the findings of a comparison of the Princes' bones with those of their cousin, Anne Mowbray, who was married to the younger Prince when she was six, and died aged nine ("Modern science convicts Richard III of murder", May 21, 1987).

The boys' blood relationship to Anne, and their precise age at death, were *established, confirming that the* skeletons were indeed the Princes', and that they died during Richard's reign.

Yours sincerely,
FABIENNE SMITH,
55 Manor Place,
Edinburgh EH3 7EG.
March 13.

Stealth defence?

From Mr Barry Pixton

Sir, So the Chairman of British Invisibles attended dinner with the Royal Navy Board, did he (letter, March 16)? How do you know?

Yours faithfully,
BARRY PIXTON,
6 Helvellyn Drive,
Burnley, Lancashire BB12 0TA.
barrypixton@lineone.net
March 16.



COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
March 16: The Queen held an Investiture this morning at Buckingham Palace.

The Lady Susan Hussey has succeeded The Hon Mary Morrison as Lady in Waiting to The Queen.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
March 16: The Duke of Edinburgh this morning departed Nice Airport, France, for Cameroon.

His Royal Highness, President Emeritus of the World Wide Fund for Nature — WWF International, this afternoon arrived at Nsimalen Civil Airport, Yaoundé, Cameroon.

The Duke of Edinburgh this evening attended a Reception at the British High Commissioner's Residence, Yaoundé, for the British Community.

His Royal Highness later attended a State Banquet at the Presidential Palace, Yaoundé, Cameroon.

ST JAMES'S PALACE
March 16: The Prince of Wales this morning arrived at Heathrow Airport.

Mr Nicholas Archer, Miss Sandy Henney, Surgeon Commodore Ian Jenkins RN and Lieutenant Commander John Lavery RN were in attendance.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
March 16: The Prince Edward, Patron, London Mozart Players, this evening attended a concert and dinner at St James's Palace to mark the orchestra's Fiftieth Anniversary.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
March 16: The Princess Royal this morning visited the Huntley Family Service Centre, Huntley, New Zealand.

Her Royal Highness later visited Dame Te Ata-I-Rangikaaahu for a traditional Maori Ceremony and Luncheon at Turangawaewae.

The Princess Royal, President, International League for the Protection of Horses, this afternoon met with their representatives at Te Rapa.

Her Royal Highness later visited Cambridge Thoroughbred Racing Stud.

The Princess Royal subsequently arrived at Wellington and was received by His Excellency Sir Michael Hardie Boys, Governor-General of New Zealand.

Her Royal Highness this evening attended a Reception given by the Governor-General of New Zealand at Government House.

KENSINGTON PALACE
March 16: The Duke of Gloucester, Grand Prior, the Order of St John, accompanied by The Duchess of Gloucester, Commandant-in-Chief, St John Ambulance Wales, today visited Wales to mark the 900th Anniversary of the Foundation of the Order.

Their Royal Highnesses this morning visited the Royal Mint, Llantrisant, Mid Glamorgan, and were received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant (Mr M.A. McLaggan).

The Duke and Duchess of Gloucester later attended a Reception at Tredegar House, Newport, Gwent and were received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant (Colonel Sir Richard Hanbury-Tenison).

Their Royal Highnesses afterwards visited Clytha Primary School, Newport, Gwent, where The Duke of Gloucester presented the Young Lifesaver Certificates.

The Duke of Gloucester subsequently attended a Service of Celebration for the 900th Anniversary of the Foundation of the Order and also the Investiture and Installation of the new Chancellor of the Priory for Wales, Mr David Thomas, at Woolos Cathedral, Newport, Gwent, Wales.

The Duchess of Gloucester in the meantime opened the St John Ambulance County Borough of Newport Headquarters, Lyne Road, Gwent.

Birthdays today

Lord Justice Aldous, 63; Professor J.R. Baines, Egyptologist, 53; Sir Donald Barron, former chairman, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 78; Viscount Bridport, 51; Alderman Sir John Chalstrey, former Lord Mayor of London, 68; Professor David Dilks, Vice-Chancellor, Hull University, 61; Vice-Admiral Sir Donald Gibson, 83; Sir Arthur Hockaday, former Director-General, Commonwealth War Graves Commission, 73; Professor George M. Hughes, zoologist, 74; Sir Robin Knox-Johnston, yachtsman, 60; the Earl of Lauderdale, 88; Professor John Lill, pianist, 55; Mrs Penelope Lively, writer, 66; Mr Alexander McQueen, fashion designer, 30; Sir Ramsay Melhuish, diplomat, 67; Lady (James) Mellon, former chair, Volunteer Development Scotland, 70; the Most Rev K.M.P. O'Brien, Archbishop of St Andrews and Edinburgh, 61; Mr Tim Rathbone, MP, 66; Sir Patrick Reilly, former diplomat, 90; Mr Kurt Russell, actor, 48; Miss Galina Samsova, ballerina, 62; Mr Brian Sedgemore, MP, 62; Sir Patrick Sergeant, founder, Euromoney Publications, 75; Dr David Stafford-Clark, psychiatrist, 83; and his son Mr Max Stafford-Clark, former artistic director, Royal Court Theatre, 58; Mr Max Taylor, chairman of Lloyd's, 51; Mr Michael Whitaker, showjumper, 39.

Royal engagements

The Queen will attend a reception for the College of Chaplains at St James's Palace at 6.30.

The Duchess of Gloucester, president, Research into Ageing, will visit their offices at New Court, St Swithin's Lane, London EC4, at 3.00.

Luncheon

Lady Mayoress
The Lady Mayoress gave a luncheon at the Mansion House yesterday for the City's Livery Companies and others concerned with the textile and fashion world. Among those present were:

Mr Gordon Prentice, MP, Mr Frederick Fox, the Director of the British Knitting and Clothing Export Council, the Chairman of Dewhurst Dent, the Managing Director of Benton & Johnson, the Chairman of Berwin & Berwin, the Chairman of Z Hinchcliffe & Sons, the Chairman of J Dege & Sons, and students from the Royal College of Art, the Royal School of Needlework, the London College of Fashion and Cordwainers' College.

Legal appointment

Mr Timothy John Bowles, barrister, to be a Master of the Supreme Court, Chancery Division, from April 1.



BEN GURR

Sunlight sparkles on a display of camellias at the RHS early spring show at Westminster yesterday

Yellow is the colour of success

By Alan Toogood
HORTICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

YELLOW camellias appear to be on the increase. A group of three different cultivars forms the centrepiece of a gold medal display of trees and shrubs at the Royal Horticultural Society's early spring show.

Staged by Burncoose Nurseries, of Redruth, Cornwall, the exhibit features the well-known yellow camellia, "Jury's Yellow", plus two newcomers, "Gwyneth Morey" and "Brushfield's Yellow". All from different breeders, the flowers appear identical, with a yellow anemone centre and white outer petals.

Spring flowering bulbs, particularly daffodils, are also featured at the show, which opened in Westminster yesterday. Broadleigh Gardens, of Bishops Hull, Somerset, has won a gold medal for a collection of daffodils which includes a good selection of cyclamineus hybrids with characteristic swept-back petals, an outstanding one being white and yellow "Trena".

In its gold medal display of spring bulbs, Potterton and Martin, of Nettleton, Lincolnshire, is featuring a new dwarf cyclamineus daffodil — bright yellow "Englander", grown and named on the nursery.

A gold medal has been awarded to Lincluden Nursery, of Bisley Green, Surrey, for a collection of conifers which are quite as colourful as the spring flowers and bulbs.

Dwarf woodland-type perennials are among the main providers of spring colour in many gardens, and are well represented at the show, particularly pulmonarias which rival the gentians with their intense blue flowers. Much sought-after is *Pulmonaria angustifolia* "Blaues Meer", with bright blue flowers set against plain green foliage, shown by Hardy's Cottage Garden Plants of Whitchurch, Hampshire.

Among the more unusual exhibits is a display of Pleiones (nearly hardy orchids) shown by the specialist grower Ian Butterfield, of Butterfield's Nursery, Bourne End, Buckinghamshire. They were once only available mainly in shades of pink, but the colour range has now been extended to include shades of yellow and orange, as the exhibit shows so well. The hybrid Shantung "Ducat" in clear primrose yellow with a crimson speckled lip takes pride of place.

Nesta J Bulbs, of Stanmore, Middlesex, is showing arisaemas and asarums, striking and often bizarre woodland perennials. One in particular is drawing the crowds — the ground-hugging *Asarum maximum* whose three-petalled, velvety, dark chocolate-brown flowers have a frosty white centre.

In the RHS early rhododendron competition the City and County of Swansea has won the class for three species (the pale yellow R. Macabeanum is outstanding), and Mr Edmund de Rothschild, of Exbury Gardens, Southampton, the class for three hybrids.

Mr D. Du Plessis, of Saltash, Cornwall, has fared well in the RHS early daffodil competition, winning the class for six cultivars and the prize for the best bloom with the hybrid "Trena".

The show, in the New Horticultural Hall, Greycoat Street, Westminster, is open today from 10am to 5pm. The RHS London Orchid Show takes place at the above venue on Saturday, March 20, and Sunday, March 21, from 10am to 5pm.

Dinners

Canada Club
Mr Robin Cook, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, was the guest of honour at a dinner of the Canada Club held last night at the Marriott Hotel, Grosvenor Square. The High Commissioner for Canada presided. Mr John Bridgeman, Director-General of the Office of Fair Trading, and Mr Andrew Neil, Editor of *The Scotsman, Scotland on Sunday* and *Sunday Business* also spoke.

Institute of the Motor Industry
Sir Arthur Gold presented Mr Nick Scheele, Chairman of Jaguar Cars, with the Castrol/IMI Gold Medal for 1998 at the annual dinner of the Institute of the Motor Industry held last night at the Savoy Hotel. Mr Martin Austin, chairman of the council of the institute, presided.

Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors
Mr Tony Edwards presided at the annual dinner of the past presidents of the General Practice division of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors held yesterday at Over-Seas House, St James's.

Mr John Evans, president, and Mr Michael Bussey were the principal guests.

Service dinner

Destroyer Club
Admiral of the Fleet Sir Julian Oswald, outgoing Chairman of the Destroyer Club, was the guest of honour at a dinner held last night at The Naval Club. Admiral Sir Jock Slater, the new chairman, presided.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Gottlieb Daimler, pioneer of motor cars, Schorndorf, Germany, 1834; Kate Greenaway, illustrator, London, 1846; Margaret Bondfield, first woman chairman of the Trades Union Congress 1923, first woman Cabinet minister 1929-31, Chard, Somerset, 1873; R.T. (Bobby) Jones, golfer, Atlanta, Georgia, 1902.

DEATHS: Marcus Aurelius, Roman Emperor 161-180, Vindobona, (Vienna), 180; Harold, King of the English 1035-40, Oxford, 1040; François, Duc de La Rochefoucauld, writer, Paris, 1680; Gilbert Burnet, bishop and historian, London, 1715; George Parker, 2nd Earl of Macclesfield, astronomer, Shirburn Castle, Oxfordshire, 1764; Daniel Bernoulli, mathematician, Basle, 1782; David Dale, industrialist and philanthropist, Glasgow, 1806; Friedrich Bessel, astronomer, Konigsberg, 1846; Christian Doppler, physicist, Venice, 1853; Sir John Bagot Glubb (Glubb Pasha), Commander of the Arab Legion 1939-56, Sussex, 1986.

Today is the Feast of St Patrick, Apostle of the Irish.

Dr Marie Stopes opened Britain's first birth control clinic in North London, 1921.

More than 300 people were arrested during anti-Vietnam War demonstrations outside the American Embassy in London, 1968.

The tanker *Amoco Cadiz* ran aground off the Brittany coast releasing more than 220,000 tons of crude oil, 1978.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr A.G.A. Coombes and Miss S.G. Whalley
The engagement is announced between Andrew, elder son of Dr Gordon Coombes, of Warwick, and Mrs Valerie Coombes, of Benfleet, Essex, and Sarah, daughter of Mr and Mrs Michael Whalley, of Bronte, New South Wales, Australia.

Mr E.F.H. Kitson and Miss E.S.G.C. Naughton
The engagement is announced between Emmanuel, elder son of Mr and Mrs Philip Kitson, of Chilmark, Wiltshire, and Edwina, daughter of Lieutenant Colonel and Mrs Patrick Naughton, of Frome, Somerset.

Mr T.J. LeRoy and Miss J.A. Smythers
The engagement is announced between Tim, elder son of Mr and Mrs Peter LeRoy, of Corston, Bath, and Juliette, daughter of Mr Conrad Smythers, of Devon, and Mrs Joan Smythers, of Chingford.

Mr B.P.A. Monro-Davies and Miss E.J. Blythe
The engagement is announced between Benedict, son of Mr and Mrs A.R.D. Monro-Davies, of Barnes, London, and Elizabeth, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs R.M. Blythe, of Oakamoor, Staffordshire.

Mr R.J.R. Pinker and Miss C.M. Sykes
The engagement is announced between Robert, youngest son of Sir George and Lady Pinker, of Willersey, Worcestershire, and Catherine, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Richard Sykes, of Orleton, near Ludlow, Shropshire.

Mr E.J.B. Seymour and Miss M.A. Neill
The engagement is announced between Edward, son of Mr and Mrs Michael Seymour, of Sternfield, Suffolk, and Mhairi, daughter of Mr and Mrs Livingston Neill, of Blanefield, Stirlingshire.

Mr J.C. Shaw and Miss R.S.L. Waite
The engagement is announced between John, younger son of Mr and Mrs Michael Shaw, of West Itchenor, Sussex, and Rebecca, daughter of Mr Norman Waite, of Wooburn Green, Buckinghamshire, and Mrs Richard Legg, of Veryan, Cornwall.

Mr A.D. Wells and Miss E.E.R. Burnham
The engagement is announced between Andrew David, son of Mr and Mrs George Wells, of The White House, Upper Woolhampton, and Emma Elizabeth, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs Peter Burnham, of Church Hill House, Midhurst, and La Herradura.

School news

Chetham's School of Music
The Committee of Chetham's School of Music announce that Mrs Claire Moreland will become Head in September 1999, following Canon Peter F. Hullah's appointment as Suffragan Bishop of Ramsbury in the Diocese of Salisbury. Mrs Moreland is currently Deputy Head of Rugby School.

Merchant Taylors' School
Spring 1999
The following scholarships have been awarded:

11+
Major Scholarships: Stuart Chaplin, Holland House School; Jason Kasler, Whitchurch Middle School.
Scholarships: Michael Laming, Orley Farm School; Ashish Mehta, Reddiford School; Samuel Popeck, Buxlow Prep School; Nikhil Shah, Mount Stewart Junior; Tej Soneji, Reddiford School; Daniel Stewart, Reddiford School; Robert Wells, Breakspear Junior School.

13+
Major Scholarships
Lord Hailey: Andrew Voysey, The Beacon.
Sir James Jeans: Miqdaad Versi, St John's.
Gilbert Murray: Kunaal Trivedi, Orley Farm.
Andrew: Mark Wolfenden, Northwood Prep.
Minor Scholarships
Malya: Simon Heawood, St John's.
Ahran Arnold, St Martin's; Anthony George, Quainton Hall; Thomas Mayo, St John's; Akshay Sanghrajka, Orley Farm; Mark Wescott, St Martin's.

16+
Narayanan Thulasidasan, Culcheth High, Warrington.
Music Scholarships
Major Scholarship: Howard Quin, Edge Grove.
Champain: Alexander Cooke, Northwood Prep
Mark Bamping, St John's; Jeremy Ip, St George's, Windsor Castle.

The School has charity status and exists for the education of children. Registered Charity No 1063740.

Summer Fields School, St Leonards on Sea
Old Boys who have not yet received an invitation to the Reunion on May 5 should apply to: The Secretary, Hill House, Cheriton, Alresford, Hampshire, SO24 0PT. Tel 01962 771204, Fax: 01962 771530.

Memorial service

Dame Mary Cartwright, FRS
A memorial service for Dame Mary Cartwright, FRS, Mistress at Girton College, Cambridge, 1949-1968 was held on Saturday in the college chapel. The Rev Jeremy Clark-King, chaplain, officiated.

Professor Marilyn Strathern, FBA, Mistress of Girton College, and Mr Nigel Cartwright, nephew, read the lessons. Canon John Polkinghorne, FRS, gave an address.

The Girton College Choir, directed by Dr Martin Ennis, sang during the service.

Requiem Mass

Miss Patricia Hayes
Cardinal Basil Hume, Archbishop of Westminster, was the principal celebrant at a memorial requiem Mass for Miss Patricia Hayes, actress, held last Friday in Westminster Cathedral. He was assisted by Father Columba Ryan, OP, the Rev James Lawley, Father Michael Perry and Father Ian Dickie.

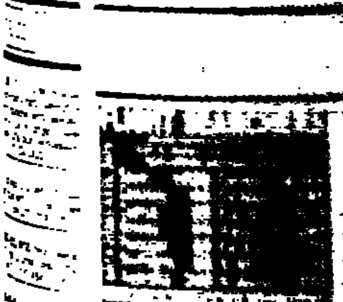
Ms Francesca Agati, Miss Gemma Craven and Mr John Normington read the lessons. Miss Elizabeth Quinn, Ms Kitty Fitzgerald of the Catholic Stage Guild, Miss Polly James, Mr Charles Pemberton, Vice-President of the CSG, and Canon Bill Hall, Senior Chaplain of the Actors' Church Union, led the bidding prayers.

Mr Michael Williams read the Actors' Prayer and Canon John McDonald, National Chairman of the CSG, preached the homily.

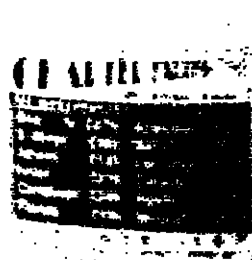
Mr Richard O'Callaghan, son, paid tribute.

Father Philip Whitmore, Father Daniel Cronin, Master of Ceremonies of the cathedral, and Mr Michael Slater, Master of Ceremonies of the CSG, were robed and in the Sanctuary.

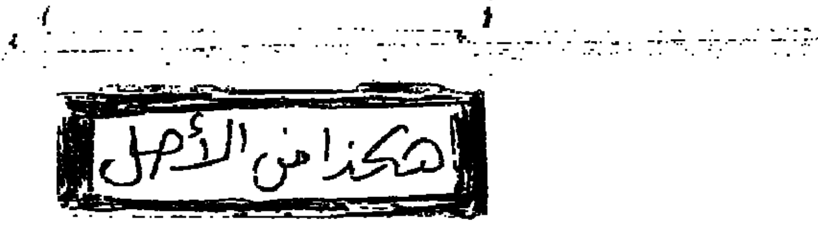
Members of the family, friends, representatives of the Royal Theatrical Fund and The Passage and many former colleagues were among those present.











OBITUARIES

TONY RIVERS

Tony Rivers, architect and journalist, died of cancer on March 1 aged 54. He was born on May 5, 1944.

TONY RIVERS was already 40 and a prolific architect when a chance anecdote turned him into a journalist who would proceed to write with an elegance and poise which many who had practised that trade all their life could never match.

The anecdote concerned a developer's insistence that Rivers pay 25 per cent of his fee for a putative project in a south-western town to a local architect, without whose involvement planning permission would not be granted. The local architect might have been the veteran of a DPP investigation, and might have erected a building on a sensitive site without planning permission, but he was at the heart of the quasi-Masonic gang of estate agents and solicitors who ran that town.

Rivers walked away, denying himself what would, even after illegitimate deductions, have been a small fortune. He was far from unworldly and was used to the semi-criminality of the construction industry, but he was a scrupulous man who, though fascinated by spivs and chancers, had no desire to become one himself. Asked to provide notes for an article on such scams for *Tatler*, Rivers happily exceeded his brief and delivered a 3,000-word finished piece which was funny, subtle, precise and moral (but not moralistic): it was serious writing.

This was during the second of Mark Boxer's four years as Editor of *Tatler*. The magazine was a world away then from the monument to snobbish vacuity that it is today. Boxer was delighted, gave Rivers licence to write about whatever he wanted, and persuaded him to give up his pseudonym, Max Gate (which is the name of the house in Dorchester that another architect turned writer, Thomas Hardy, designed for himself).

Although Boxer could not persuade him to write full-time, Rivers became as prolific a journalist as he was an architect. His energy was prodigious. His range was wide, thanks to his first-hand knowledge of milieux which career journalists are necessarily not privy to.

He was also a relentless autodidact, the result, perhaps, of having failed the 11-plus. Quite how someone of such intelligence and curiosity managed to fail that exam was a source of wonder to his friends, and would have been, had they known of it, to those who read him in *The Times* Magazine, *The Daily Telegraph*, the *Daily Mail*, *The Sunday Times*, *The Observer*, *Blueprint* and elsewhere. He also presented the BBC2 series *The Name of the Room* and wrote the book of the series.

Rivers: from prolific architect to energetic journalist

Anthony Rivers was born in Ipswich, educated at Copplestone Secondary Modern, and began work there at the age of 16 in the practice of Hooper and Olley. As in his later journalism, so in architecture he arrived fully formed: he designed his first building, a warehouse, when he was 18. He subsequently studied at Hammersmith School of Architecture and Building under Arthur Korn, who opened his eyes to the extraordinariness of ordinary London, to its squares, gardens, terraces.

The first London practice he worked for was that of Howard V. Lobb, which specialised in transport buildings: service stations, garages, yacht clubs. In 1972 he was hired by Whicheloe Macfarlane, and five years later he co-founded Hodson Rivers. His friends, soon apprised of the imbalance of endeavour between the partners, suggested it would be better named Rivers & Tributary.

That partnership endured a decade. Rivers was only mildly riled when his partner suggested that his journalistic fees should be paid into the firm, but the partnership was dissolved amid acrimony and recrimination, and Rivers started anew in Camden.

Rivers's considerable output included service stations, golf club-houses, churches, shops and factories, but the building types that most interested him — and at which he excelled — were sheltered accommodation and the terrace. He would fling himself on the floor in a convincing depiction of a heart attack in order to demonstrate the uselessness of the single emergency button at dado height. He would scramble as though deprived of his motor functions and kick the wainscot: if the entire wainscot could be alarmed, then help could be summoned. He won awards for sheltered housing schemes.

In 1974 he designed the house that he lived in for the rest of his life. Highbury Terrace Mews in that decade was akin to Camden Mews and Surrey Mews in the 1960s — a street where young architects built on a shoestring for themselves and their friends. Altogether he designed five houses there.

He belonged to no school. He was as exasperated by the jokey populism of postmodernism as he had been by the solemn nostrums of totalitarian modernism. He could execute deft pastiches of Victorian and Edwardian, but his best work displayed a grace and restrained elegance which recalled the humane modernism of Oud and Bodson.

His manner was diffident, sceptical and amused. He was a tolerant agnostic who was happy that his wife, the former Mary Clark, should bring up their son and daughter in the Roman Catholic faith. They survive him.

KIRK ALYN

Kirk Alyn, actor, died on March 14 aged 88. He was born on October 8, 1910.

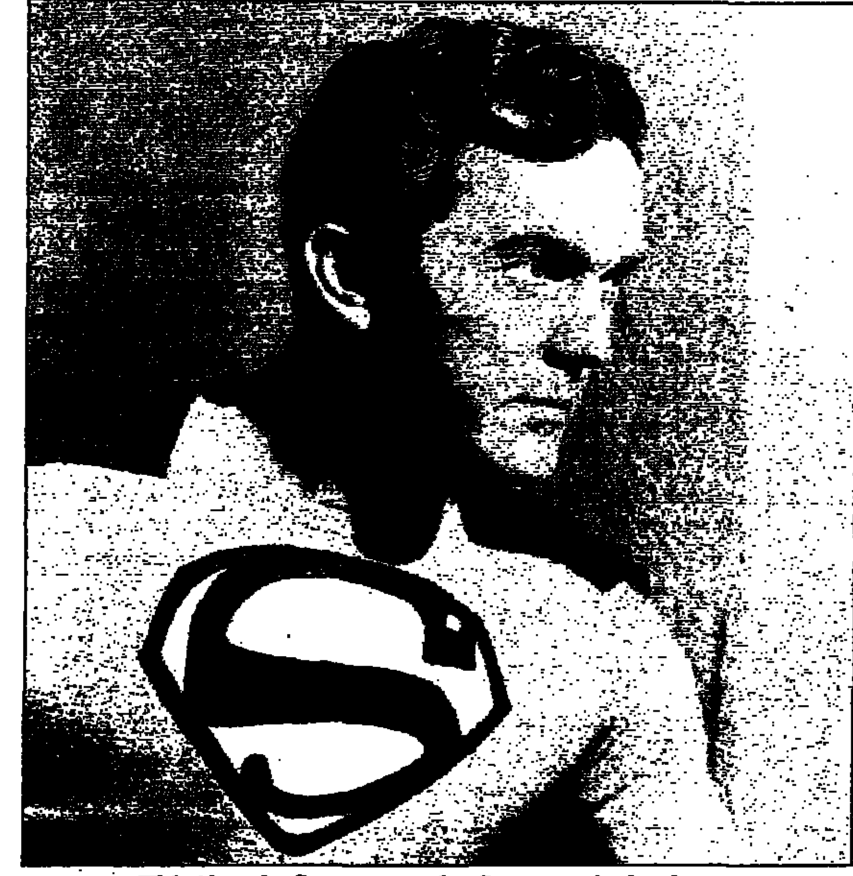
IN THE LATE 1940s Kirk Alyn was more commonly known to the cinema going public as Superman, the superhero from Krypton who dodged bullets, leapt over buildings and rescued kittens. Alyn was the first actor to play the Man of Steel on the silver screen, featuring in two action films *Superman* (1948) and *Atom Man vs Superman* (1950), but as with many who would follow him, he found his time after Superman hard, later lamenting that the part had ruined his life.

Devised by Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster in 1934, Superman first hit the stands in *Action Comics* in 1938, and by 1940 had been adapted to radio and cartoon form. By this time the exploits of the man who fought for truth, justice and the American way had captured the imagination of a young generation, and in 1948 Columbia Pictures decided that Superman was ready for a slot on Saturday morning matinées, in the form of a 15-part serial.

Alyn was reticent about taking on a serial-format motion picture, but it turned out to be a success, even though the process of recreating Superman's superpowers was hampered by the technology of the day. The standard line of the bemused onlooker may have been "Is it a bird? Is it a plane?", but rather than flying, the actor had to jump from window-ledge to window-ledge, with Alyn utilising a hidden mattress a few feet below to break his fall.

Born John Feggo Jr in Oxford, New Jersey, Alyn was already 37 when he took this role, having performed in vaudeville and chorus acts in New York. On moving to Hollywood, he gained a contract at Columbia where his first role was as a Portuguese sailor in *My Sister Eileen* (1942). He took other bit-parts there and at Republic, where he played in westerns such as *The Man From the Rio Grande* (1943).

After time in the US Navy, he rejoined Republic, where he enjoyed his first major part in the serial *Daughter of Don Q*. It was this performance that secured his role as Superman — though his physical resemblance to the comic character Clark Kent did also play its part.



Kirk Alyn: the first actor to play Superman in the cinema

Alyn starred elsewhere, such as in the crime thriller *Federal Agents vs Underworld Inc.* (1949), but after his second Superman serial, *Atom Man vs Superman*, he found it difficult to break the mould. Following *Radar Patrol vs Spy King* (1950) and *Blackhawk* (1952) he fell into obscurity. "Playing Superman ruined my career and I'm bitter about the whole thing," he later remarked, "I couldn't get another job in Hollywood."

George Reeves, who played the Man of Steel after Alyn, found being Superman even more exacting. He killed himself in 1959, and many more have since succumbed to what has been dubbed "The Curse of Superman". Its creators Siegel and Shuster sold the rights of their creation to DC Comics for little over $100, spending the remainder of their lives in legal wranglings with DC, while Margot Kidder, who played Lois Lane in the 1978 big-budget remake, was admitted to a mental hospital in 1996 after suffering from paranoid delusions. Only a year before, the star of that film and its three sequels, Christopher Reeve, was paralysed from the neck down in a riding accident.

Alyn himself spent the last years of his life suffering from Alzheimer's disease. He did have a small part in the Warner film of 1978, playing the father of Lois Lane, but it was later cut out for cinema.

He married Virginia O'Brien in 1942. They divorced 12 years later. They had two sons and a daughter.

GENERAL SIR JOHN ARCHER

General Sir John Archer, KCB, OBE, C-in-C UK Land Forces, 1978-79, died on March 12 aged 75. He was born on February 12, 1924.

A MAN of great charm, but possessed nevertheless of an inner determination to succeed in all that he undertook, John Archer held key command and staff appointments in the Army in a 35-year career. In particular, he carried out a number of difficult tasks — notably those of painful retrenchment in various spheres — without generating controversy.

Arthur John Archer was educated at King's School, Peterborough, and St Catharine's College, Cambridge. He enlisted in the Army in 1943, and was given an emergency commission in the Royal Norfolk Regiment in 1944, followed by a regular commission in the Dorsetshire Regiment in 1946.

He started to make his name after attending the Staff College, Camberley, in 1956, when he was posted as a GSO2 in the Military Operations Directorate of the War Office in the aftermath of the Suez crisis. This earned him his MBE.

In 1963 he became GSO1 to the 3rd Infantry Division. This was soon on its way to Cyprus at Archbishop Makarios's request to intervene in renewed fighting between Greeks and Turks. Archer was responsible for the detailed staff work for the division's rapid deployment by air to Cyprus; the re-establishment of a British military security framework on the island; and the eventual handover of responsibility to the United Nations. He was promoted OBE in 1964.

In 1965 Archer was given command of the 1st Battalion the Devonshire and Dorset Regiment, and it fell to him to convert it into one of the first mechanised infantry battalions, equipped with the FV423 armoured personnel carrier. He was training his battalion in Libya when the Arab-Israeli Six-Day War broke out in 1967. Training was broken off and the battalion was redeployed to protect the British enclaves at Benghazi and El Adem from attack by Arab nationalists.

In 1968 he went out to Bahrain as a brigadier to command British Land Forces Persian Gulf a year after the British withdrawal from Aden. Anti-British feeling was still running high throughout the Middle East, requiring from him considerable tact and political awareness.

These qualities were even more useful to him in his next appointment, which was as Director of Army Public Relations in the Ministry of Defence from 1970 to 1972 when the final withdrawal from East of Suez was taking place and Army recruiting was in the doldrums. Extrovert, articulate and perceptive, he presented the Army to the media with skill and forbearance.

His first appointment as a major-general was in command of the 2nd Division in BAOR. This was in 1972 during the short-lived Heath Government when the traumas of the Healey defence review period seemed to be over, and the Army on the Continent was benefiting marginally from resources released by the completion of the withdrawal from empire. It was a false dawn for the Army and for Archer.

In the spring of 1974, he was back in Whitehall as the Director of Army Staff Duties, grappling with the organisational problems thrown up by the new Labour Government's renewed defence review and fighting to save the regiments from a further bout of amalgamations. He had to implement the Army Board's abortive attempt to reduce overheads by dispensing with the brigade level of command. Its failure was no fault of his: the Army was just not ready for so radical a change and brigade HQs were reintroduced a few years later. It did, however, save some regiments for a few years.

In 1976 Archer was appointed C-in-C British Forces Hong Kong and Lieutenant-General of the Brigade of Gurkhas. Two years later, he took over as C-in-C United Kingdom Land Forces at a time when there was a slight upturn in Army fortunes, stemming from the agreed Nato policy of increasing defence spending annually by 3 per cent. He was able to improve the operational readiness of the strategic reserve units, but it was yet another false dawn before the Nott defence review after his retirement brought further cutbacks.

In retirement from 1979, Archer returned to Hong Kong, where he served from 1980 to 1986 as chief executive of the Hong Kong Jockey Club, a non-profitmaking racing organisation, the proceeds of which are devoted to charitable projects of all kinds. At the end of this period he finally retired to Dorset.

Throughout his life he enjoyed flying light aircraft and gliders, and ran the Army Gliding Association for some years. He was Colonel of the Devonshire and Dorset Regiment, 1977-79.

John Archer is survived by his wife Marie, and by their two sons.

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR IAN HARRIS

Lieutenant-General Sir Ian Harris, KBE, CB, DSO, GOC Northern Ireland, 1966-69, died on March 12 aged 88. He was born on July 7, 1910.

TOMMY HARRIS — as he was known for most of his life — was a Royal Ulster Rifleman who came from Southern Ireland and built up his connections with the North through his military career and, after his retirement from the Army, through his association with the Irish Bloodstock Breeders.

The son of J. W. A. Harris, owner of the Ballykisteen and Victor Stud, at Golden, Tipperary, he was educated at Portora Royal School, Enniskillen, and Sandhurst, and was commissioned into the Royal Ulster Rifles in 1930. He acquired his nickname Tommy because as a young man straight from Sandhurst he habitually referred to his riflemen, much to their indignation, as tommies.

In the early part of the war he held a series of staff appointments in England before being given command of the 2nd Battalion in August 1943, while it was training for the Normandy landings as part of the 9th Infantry Brigade. The brigade landed on D-Day and was soon thrust into the fighting to stop the 21st Panzer Division breaking through to the sea between the 3rd Division and the Canadian Corps.

In the two days of heavy fighting it took to seal off the panzer breach the brigade commander was severely wounded and Harris took command for a short time. In the final battle for Caen, his battalion led the 3rd Division's thrust from the northeast into the ruins of the city where they joined hands with the Canadians fighting their way in from the west.

He led the 2nd Battalion throughout the battles in Normandy and in the advance across northern France. He was awarded his DSO for consistent gallantry in the autumn of 1944.

In 1945 he was sent out to the Far East in a series of important General Staff Officer I appointments: 25th Indian Division in its advance down the Arakan coast in Burma; 7th Indian Division in the reoccupation of Malaya that autumn; and the Rawalpindi Area during the withdrawal from India in 1947-48.

By 1951 he was back at last in Northern Ireland: first, commanding the 6th Battalion (TA) and then as Chief of Staff Northern Ireland District. Next he commanded Malaya's 1st Federal Infantry Brigade, in operations against the Communist insurgents in the final phases of the Malayan campaign from 1954 to 1957.

He was then appointed to the key post of Deputy Director of Staff Duties (A) in the War Office, responsible for the executive deployment of the Army worldwide. His first major-general's job was as GOC Singapore District in 1960, and this was followed by Chief of Staff (Contingencies Planning) at Supreme Allied Headquarters Europe in 1963. There he was in charge of Nato plans to deal with a Soviet threat to occupy West Berlin. His last military appointment was, appropriately, back in Northern Ireland as its GOC in 1966, before Ulster was racked by the Troubles.

In retirement Harris was deeply involved in the amalgamation that formed the Royal Irish Rangers in 1967-68. As Regimental Colonel of the Royal Ulster Rifles and the senior of the three Irish regimental colonels, he steered it through against tough opposition.

After leaving the Army he returned to his family partnership and management of the Ballykisteen Stud in Tipperary, and to running the Victor Stud. He was initially very successful, Auction Ring becoming champion sire in 1979. But bad debts plagued him in the 1980s and it took the stud some time to recover.

He was chairman of the Irish Bloodstock Breeders Association from 1977 to 1979, and its president from 1984 to 1988.

In 1945 he married Anne-Marie Desmotreux, whom he had met the year before when his regimental headquarters occupied her family's chateau in Normandy. With her support and encouragement he played a leading role in establishing and running the British Army Museum in Caen.

He is survived by her and by one of their two sons.

ON THIS DAY

March 17, 1923

One of the children of the beautiful Queen Milena, Princess Helena, married the future King Victor Emmanuel III of Italy. The statuesque queen towered over her husband who was said to be barely 5ft tall.

DEATH OF QUEEN MILENA: A FAMOUS BEAUTY

Paris, March 16

Queen Milena of Montenegro died at Antibes, near Nice, at 1.30 this morning. The Grand Duchess Nicholas and several of her other children were present.

The Queen of Italy, who had remained with her mother for several days, left Cap d'Antibes at midnight by special train for Rome, and a telegram informing her of her mother's death was handed to her when the Royal train reached Genoa. Her Majesty *immediately returned to Antibes*.

M. Armand Bernard, Prefect of the Alpes Maritimes, conveyed to the Queen of Italy this morning the sympathy of the President of the Republic and of the French Government.

Queen Milena of Montenegro was the daughter of the Montenegrin Voivode Vukotich, whose family was connected with the princely house of Petrovich. She was born on May 5, 1847, and was brought up in the patriarchal traditions of the Black Mountain; it is said that as a little girl she sometimes tended her father's flocks on the upland pastures. On November 9, 1860, at the age of 13, she was married to Nicholas I (who had recently succeeded his uncle, Danilo I, as Prince of Montenegro), in the little Vlaska church at Cettigne, where, 50 years later, the Royal couple — the Prince had assumed the title of King on the previous day — celebrated their golden wedding with an interesting ceremony, which was followed by a series of enthusiastic and picturesque demonstrations on the part of the people. They lived to celebrate their diamond wedding, but in less happy circumstances.

Queen Milena possessed great beauty, which she retained unimpaired in advancing years, a dignified presence, and a peculiarly sweet and engaging manner. She took no part in politics, and in accordance with the custom of the country, confined herself to domestic interests, the care of her large family, and works of charity. King Nicholas, who visited the British Army in France during the war, steadfastly refused to recognize the annexation of his kingdom by Peter I of Yugo-Slavia, who had been the husband of his eldest daughter, Princess Zorka. He died at Antibes on March 1, 1921, and a week later his eldest son, Prince Danilo, abdicated in favour of his nephew, the young Prince Michael, then 12 years old, the son of the late Prince Mirko, of Montenegro, under the regency of Queen Milena.

Of the Queen's eight surviving children, the eldest daughter, Princess Militza, is married to the Grand Duke Peter Nicolaievitch, the second, Princess Stana, to the Grand Duke Nicholas Nikolaievitch, Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Armies in 1914-15; the third, Princess Helena, is Queen of Italy; the fourth, Princess Anna, is the wife of Prince Francis Joseph of Battenberg. Her other children, Princesses Xenia and Vera and Prince Peter, are unmarried.

It is considered improbable that the visit of the King and Queen to Italy will need to be postponed on account of the death of Queen Milena.

PERSONAL COLUMN

THE TIMES TODAY

NEWS

Europe seeks new President

■ European leaders embarked on a search for a new European Commission president after Jacques Santer infuriated many of them by defiantly rejecting the charges of political failure that brought the resignation of the whole Brussels executive.

Compounding the political turmoil raging across the 15-nation bloc, a humiliated Mr Santer claimed that the verdict of incompetence was a shocking travesty. "I consider the tone of the report to be wholly unjustified," he said..................Pages 1, 4-7

Blair wants a swift decision

■ Tony Blair and Gerhard Schröder called for a "heavyweight" to take over swiftly from Jacques Santer, squashing any attempt by the European Commission President to stay in office. The Prime Minister said that the resignations should be used as the opportunity to push through reform ....Page 1

Pitman jumps down

Jenny Pitman, jump racing's eternal female lead yielded to her incurable taste for the theatrical by announcing her retirement at the Cheltenham Festival..........Page 1

Rats help births

Four men considered sterile by doctors have fathered healthy babies after their sperm was matured inside rats' testicles, an Italian gynaecologist said......Page 1

Hospital chaos

A picture of chaos at a hospital that was supposed to be a centre of excellence began to emerge at the opening of the public inquiry into the Bristol children's heart operations scandal..................Page 2

'Fainting game'

Boys at Eton regularly played a "fainting game" that involved two of them tightening a cord around the neck of a third, an inquest was told..................Page 3

Lads lose out

Britain has produced a class of "loser lads" who believe they will fail at school, work and life, a survey claims..................Page 8

Blue lamp sale

Too many police stations are out of date, under-used and in the wrong place, according to the Audit Commission. Police buildings worth at least £110 million are already up for sale..............Page 10

Car bomb inquiry

The RUC has asked an English officer and the FBI to oversee the investigation into the murder of Rosemary Nelson ....Page 12

Adding up

Mathematics should no longer be the preserve of swots, Tony Blair said as he launched a teaching strategy requiring more use of the brain and less of calculators in primary schools..................Page 13

Olympic campaign

Juan Antonio Samaranch, has admitted that there is a campaign among members of the International Olympic Committee to force his resignation..........Page 14

Jerusalem row

Differences between Israel and Europe over Jerusalem widened when Israel announced as "null and void" a UN resolution calling for internationalisation...Page 15

Border clashes

Up to 150 Zimbabwean soldiers are reported to have been killed in battles with rebel forces in the southeast of the Democratic Republic of Congo..........Page 16

13 die on crossing

At least 13 people were killed, with others missing, and more than 100 were injured when a passenger train ploughed into a lorry at a level crossing at Bourbonnais, south of Chicago.....Page 17

England captains come home

Two former England cricket captains strode into the Long Room when the first women members of the MCC entered that hallowed hall of Lords. The club named its first ten honorary women members. Eight were at Lords, including Rachael Heyhoe Flint, who led the national team for ten years, and Carole Cornthwaite, captain in the 1980s..................Page 9

RICHARD CANNON



Lloyd Grossman and Sir Jocelyn Stevens of English Heritage in Westminster Abbey at the unveiling of an exhibition of wall paintings

BUSINESS

Auto deal: Renault has agreed to take a 35 per cent stake in Nissan, the troubled Japanese car manufacturer, at a cost of between $4 billion and $6 billion..........Page 25

Dow delight: America's benchmark Dow Jones share index rose above 10,000 for the first time, completing a remarkable recovery from the sharp slump in world markets last September..........Page 25

Bluewater bobbies: The owners of the new Bluewater shopping complex in north Kent have acquired 22 police officers at an annual cost of £750,000..........Page 25

Markets: The FTSE 100 fell 4.9 to 6201.9. The pound rose .26 cents to $1.6242 and .34p to 67.15p against the euro. The pound index rose to 102.8 from 102.3..........Page 28

SPORT

Racing: Istabraq, the 9-4 on favourite, justified the odds and won his second Smurfit Champion Hurdle on the opening day of the Cheltenham Festival..........Page 48

Football: Alex Ferguson said that if Manchester United hold off Internazionale, the victory would give them the confidence to win the Champions' Cup..........Page 48

Cricket: West Indies took only 40 minutes to secure a ten-wicket victory over Australia in the second Test in Jamaica to level the series with two matches to play..........Page 45

Rugby union: Mike Catt was recalled to replace the injured Paul Grayson as England's fly half against France in the Five Nations, the only change from the side that beat Ireland..........Page 46

Teenage turn-off: Fewer than one in a hundred teenagers lists going to the theatre as a hobby, according to a new survey. Now theatres are making fresh attempts to woo the young..........Page 34

Black and White Trojan Show: At the National Theatre, Trevor Nunn's new production of *Troilus and Cressida* makes use of black and white casts to differentiate Trojans and Greeks..........Page 34

Missile art: The disused nuclear missile base at Greenham Common has inspired two young artists to assemble a chilling video installation..........Page 35

Fiddler supreme: The violinist Anne-Sophie Mutter stole the show at the LSO's concert to mark André Previn's 70th birthday..........Page 36

Brain buzz: When we get a joke or a riddle, there is a definite feeling that comes with the moment. It is the brain's way of telling us right from wrong..........Page 18

Nigel Hawkes: How scientists in two continents have clashed over Big Bang..........Page 18

Living memory: Terence Donovan, the East Ender who became a star photographer with a devoted family and friends, was, says his wife, adored. Yet none of it made his life worth living beyond the age of 60. But now his wife has come to terms with his death..........Page 19

Joanna Coles: Fire in Manhattan, murder in Brooklyn..........Page 19

Multi-city: Projects to regenerate the inner city usually concentrate on housing, family size, density and design. The ethnic origin of those likely to be living in them is rarely taken into account. But two schemes are dealing with multicultural urban dwellers..........Page 39

The unlawful detention of six reporters from this newspaper, the equally illegal house arrest of several other members of staff in their offices and the brazen attempt by the state to prevent the publication of this newspaper last week, paint perhaps the grimmest picture yet of the inner workings of the MMD Government — *The Post, Zambia*

TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

■ **SURVIVORS**
Creating opportunity out of crisis: how companies can survive a disaster

■ **FILMS**
Paranoia and suspense... *Arlington Road*, with Tim Robbins, Jeff Bridges and Joan Cusack, has them both

Preview: Why angry Londoners oppose a memorial garden: *Diana's Neighbours (BBC2, 9pm)* **Review:** "David Beckham has the football talent of a Titan but the mental complexity of a tomato"....Pages 46, 47

Get out, stay out

The independent experts observed: "The temptation to deprive the concept of responsibility of all substance is a dangerous one." To that temptation, the Commissioners and most EU Governments seem ready to yield. This supposedly cathartic drama could end up as a "Japanese" purge, in which heads roll only to ensure that things continue much as before, with much the same discredited cast. That would be an outrage..........Page 21

Fifty-eight days to die

"I did not kill" Mrs Ormerod, her doctor claims. But the fear that he unethically accelerated nature's course lingers..................Page 21

SIMON JENKINS

Brussels vanished under a mountain of self-exculpatory spin. The incident was the "coming of age" of European democracy. It was an opportunity for "ruthless action to root out corruption"..........Page 20

MARTIN FLETCHER

The IRA must start to disarm to prevent the collapse of the Good Friday accord but if hopes were slim before Mrs Nelson's murder, they are now all but shredded..Page 20

ALAN COREN

For myself, I cannot wait for the the first green anorak to clamber over my fence..................Page 20

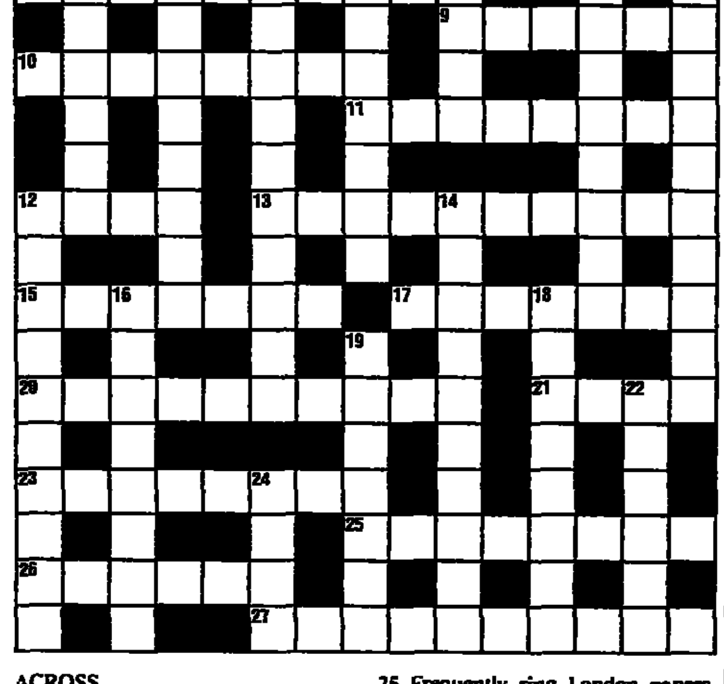
PETER RIDDELL

Reform of the commission has now become a crucial part of the Government's campaign to convince the British public of the advantages of Europe..................Page 7

General Sir John Archer, former C-in-C UK Land Forces; **Kirk Alyn**, actor; **Tony Rivers**, architect and journalist..................Page 23

EU Commissioners' resignation; race and ability in schools; questions for Hague on euro; regional accents; Bulger case..........Page 21

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 21,053



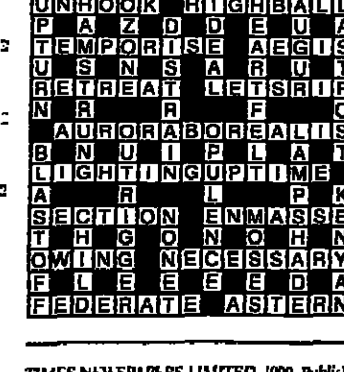
ACROSS

1 He used 5 to see how people measured up (10).
9 Fool is going to island in place of saint (6).
10 Wearing a suit? Not half! (2,6).
11 Bleating about having chance to get in touch (8).
12 Exuberance in life, right? (4).
13 Sheer – ought to be changed? (3-7).
15 Element briefly becoming socially acceptable (7).
17 Catcall about that dreadful bookmaker (7).
20 It takes more than vodka to get Red Army drunk (6,4).
21 Just opened, providing a drink (4).
23 Unfortunately out in test for 26 (8).
25 Frequently ring London papers (3-5).
26 Not so much performing as teaching (6).
27 Bull easy to shift? Yes, indeed! (10).

DOWN

2 Artist about to put on his black (6).
3 Better college outside West African city (4,4).
4 As would-be actor, risk failing test? (10).
5 Equipment for checking engines in international base (4,3).
6 Observed new cut (4).
7 Painting equipment that goes to Cockney's head? (8).
8 This president liked, at heart, to be informal (10).
12 Copper has nerve to take on athlete (10).
14 Take lead, say, in this sort of band (5,5).
16 Desertion of a place of duty, say – terrible (8).
18 Mouth quiet – it's ordered for him (8).
19 Runs out of sitting rooms? That's dangerous (7).
22 A person of distinction, moreover (2,4).
24 No-one cast up on a Scottish island (4).

Solution to Puzzle No 21,052



Times Two Crossword, page 48

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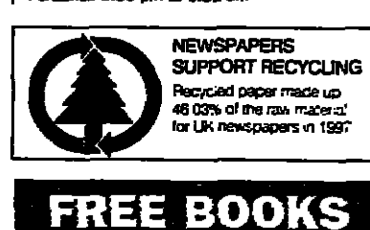
HOURS OF DARKNESS

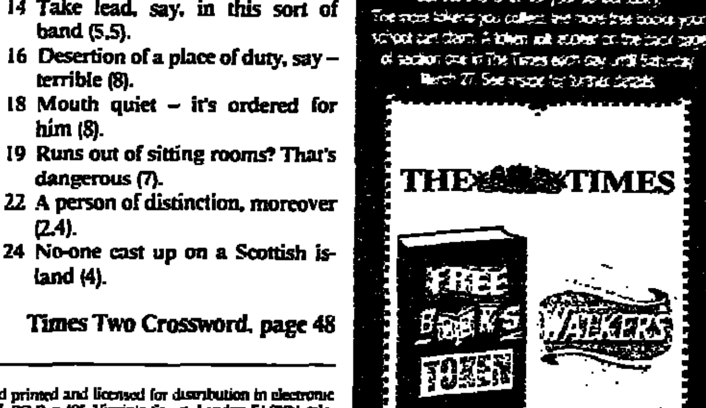
Sun rises: 6.11 am — Sun sets: 6.07 pm

Moon sets: 5.49 pm — Moon rises: 6.20 am

New moon today

London 6.07 pm to 6.09 am
Bristol 6.18 pm to 6.19 am
Edinburgh 6.19 pm to 6.22 am
Manchester 6.16 pm to 6.18 am
Penzance 6.30 pm to 6.31 am





□ **General:** England and Wales will have a dry and very mild day with any early banks of fog and low cloud lifting to leave sunny spells in most places. The best of the sunshine is likely to be in central and southern areas with some duller interludes over coasts and hills in the north and west. Scotland and Northern Ireland will also be very mild with sunny intervals developing in the sheltered eastern areas, but western regions will have a lot of cloud and some local drizzle.

□ **London, SE England, E Anglia, E Midlands, E England:** mostly dry and mild with cloud breaking to leave sunny spells by afternoon. A light and variable breeze. Max 16C (61F)

□ **Central S England, W Midlands:** early mist lifting to leave plenty of warm sunshine. A light and variable breeze. Max 16C (61F)

□ **Channel Islands, SW England:** mild, dry and mostly sunny but mist and fog lingering on coasts and hills. A light and variable wind. Max 13C (55F)

□ **S Wales, N Wales, NW England, Lake District, Isle of Man, Central N England, NE England:** some mist and fog at first but sunny spells developing away from hills.

A light west to south-westerly wind Max 15C (59F).

□ **Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, Moray Firth, NE Scotland, Orkney:** some cloud over hills, but mild and dry with good sunny periods elsewhere. A moderate south-westerly wind. Max 14C (57F).

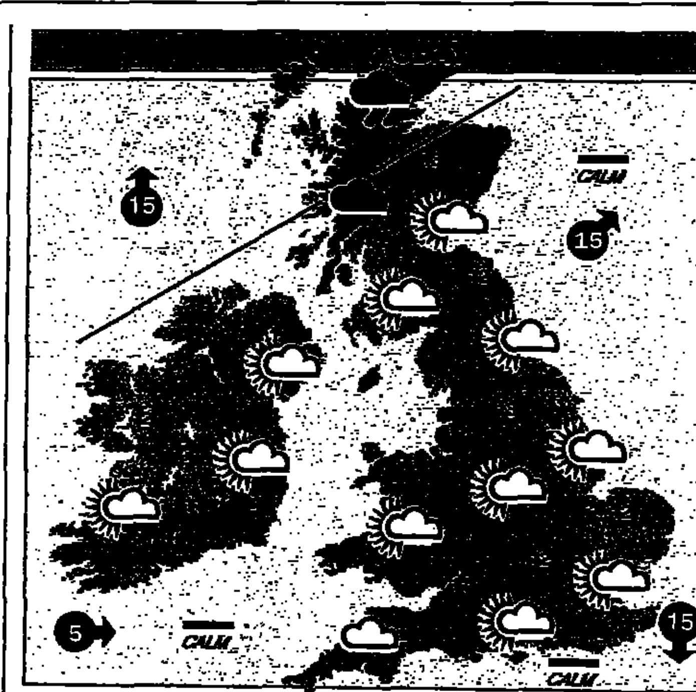
□ **SW Scotland, Glasgow, Argyll, NW Scotland:** some drizzle on coasts and hills, but mild with a few sunny breaks possible. A moderate to fresh south-westerly wind. Max 12C (54F).

□ **Central Highlands, Shetland:** mainly cloudy with some drizzle likely and only the occasional sunny break. A strong south-westerly wind. Max 12C (54F)

□ **N Ireland:** some cloud in west but dry and mild with good sunny spells elsewhere. A moderate south-westerly wind. Max temp 14C (57F).

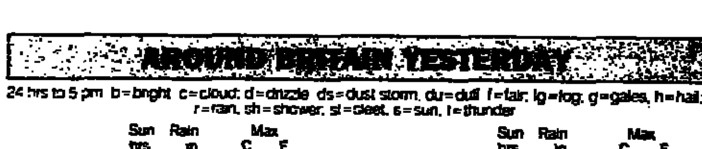
□ **Irish Republic:** dry and bright with sunny spells, mainly in east. wind: southwesterly, light to moderate. warm, max 16C (61F).

□ **Outlook:** it will become much colder with sunny spells and showers in most places. The showers will be heaviest and most frequent in the north with sleet and snow mixed in. Drifting snow is likely over the Scottish hills.



Changes to chart below from noon: high F will decline while high G remains stationary and builds. Lows S and T will combine while drifting slowly north and deepening





AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

24 hrs to 5 pm: b=bright, c=cloud, d=drizzle, ds=dust storm, du=dull, f=fair, fg=fog, g=gales, h=hail, r=rain, sh=shower, sl=sleet, s=sun, t=thunder

	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	Max F	
Aberdeen	-	0.21	14	57	c
Anglesey	3.8	0.02	11	52	fg
Aspatria	1.5	0.02	12	54	b
Aviemore	1.7	0.01	13	55	r
Belfast	3.3	0.08	15	59	s
Birmingham	7.5	-	16	61	s
Bognor R	10.5	-	14	57	s
Bournemth	9.5	-	14	57	s
Bristol	4.6	0.01	13	55	c
Buxton	0.4	0.01	13	55	b
Cardiff	3.3	-	13	55	s
Clacton	10.0	-	8	46	s
Colwyn Bay	6.5	0.01	16	61	s
Cromer	3.2	0.01	13	55	b
Eastbourne	9.8	-	12	54	s
Edinburgh	0.7	0.03	15	59	c
Eskdalemuir	-	0.04	8	46	fg
Exmouth	5.6	-	14	57	s
Fishguard	4.6	0.01	12	54	d
Folkestone	10.4	-	12	54	s
Glasgow	-	0.10	11	52	d
Guernsey	8.7	-	14	57	s
Hastings	10.0	-	11	52	s
Hayling I.	9.6	-	11	52	s
Herne Bay	9.3	-	15	59	s
Hove	8.1	-	11	52	s
Hunstanton	3.7	-	13	55	s
Isle of Man	4.5	0.13	12	54	fg
Isle of Wight	X	0.01	14	57	s
Jersey	10.2	0.01	13	55	s
Kinloss	0.7	0.01	15	59	c
Leeds	1.5	0.13	15	59	r
Lerwick	-	0.38	9	48	r
Leuchars	-	0.01	13	55	c
Littlehampton	9.7	-	13	55	s
London	8.3	-	16	61	s
Lowestoft	6.5	0.01	10	50	s
Manchester	1.1	0.02	16	61	b
Margate	9.1	-	13	55	s
Morecambe	2.2	0.06	12	54	b
Newcastle	-	0.11	13	55	c
Newquay	6.0	-	12	54	s
Norwich	4.8	0.01	14	57	s
Oxford	3.8	-	15	59	s
Penzance	5.8	0.01	15	59	s
Poole	6.2	-	14	57	s
Prestatyn	3.1	-	17	63	b
Ross on Wye	6.3	-	16	61	s
Saunton Sands	7.1	-	13	55	s
Scarborough	0.5	0.01	14	57	c
Shrewsbury	6.1	0.01	16	61	s
Skegness	2.6	-	13	55	c
Southsea	10.3	-	14	57	s
Stornoway	-	0.66	12	54	r
Swanage	9.3	-	13	55	s
Teignmouth	6.0	-	12	54	s
Tenby	2.9	-	11	52	b
Tiree	-	0.02	10	50	d
Torquay	5.8	-	12	54	s

ABROAD

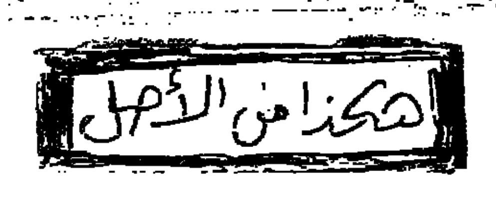
	C	F	
Ajaccio	18	64	s
Akrotiri	19	66	s
Alexdria	20	68	s
Algiers	17	63	c
Amst'dm	11	52	f
Athens	13	55	f
Bahrain	23	73	s
Bangkok	34	93	f
Barbados	29	84	f
Barcelona	17	63	f
Beijing	3	37	c
Beirut	18	64	f
Belgrade	8	46	f
Berlin	3	37	c
Bermuda	21	70	f
Biarritz	13	55	c
Bordeaux	19	66	s
Brussels	10	50	s
Budapest	7	45	f
B Aires	30	86	f
Cairo	22	72	f
Cape Tn	29	84	s
Chicago	4	39	s
Ch'church	16	61	X
Cologne	11	52	f
C'phagn	2	36	c
Corfu	17	63	f
Dublin	12	54	f
Dubrovnik	15	59	s
Faro	18	64	s
Florence	17	63	s
Frankfurt	13	55	s
Funchal	17	63	c
Geneva	15	59	s
Gibraltar	15	59	c
Helsinki	0	32	c
Hong K	18	64	c
Innsbruck	15	59	s
Istanbul	6	43	f
Jeddah	28	82	s
Jo'burg	22	72	f
L Palmas	20	68	f
Le Touqt	10	50	s
Lisbon	16	61	s
Locarno	17	63	s
L Angeles	10	50	r
Luxembg	13	55	s
Luxor	24	75	s
Madrid	14	57	f
Majorca	18	64	f
Malaga	18	64	s
Malta	18	64	s
Melbourne	18	64	c
Mexico C	19	66	s
Miami	19	66	s
Milan	19	66	s
Montreal	1	34	s
Moscow	-5	23	f
Munich	8	46	c
Nairobi	22	72	t
Naples	20	68	s
N Delhi	27	81	s
N York	2	36	f
Nice	19	66	f
Oslo	-2	28	c
Paris	13	55	s
Perth	30	86	s
Prague	8	46	f
Reykjavik	0	32	s
Rhodes	16	61	s
Rio de J	24	75	f
Riyadh	25	77	s
Rome	21	70	s
Rnldsway	9	48	f
Salzburg	9	48	c
S Frisco	X		
Santiago	24	75	s
S Paulo	X		
Seoul	13	55	s
Singapore	30	86	r
Stockholm	2	36	sn
Strasb'rg	13	55	c
Sydney	23	73	s
Tangier	16	61	c
Tel Aviv	19	66	f
Tenerife	20	68	f
Tokyo	16	61	r
Toronto	3	37	s
Tunis	19	66	f
Valencia	13	55	r
Vanc'ver	3	37	r
Venice	16	61	f
Vienna	7	45	c
Warsaw	0	32	sn
Wellngton	17	63	X
Zurich	13	55	s

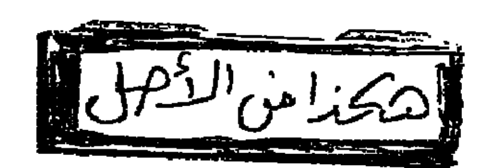
Temperatures at midday local time on Monday X = not available

TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT
Aberdeen	0:58	4.2	13:04	4.3
Avonmouth	6:53	13.5	19:15	13.5
Belfast	10:40	3.4	23:06	3.4
Cardiff	6:39	12.4	19:01	12.5
Devonport	5:24	5.4	17:48	5.4
Dover	10:37	6.5	23:00	6.8
Dublin	11:09	4.1	23:39	4.0
Falmouth	4:56	5.2	17:19	5.2
Greenock	0:03	3.1	12:29	3.4
Harwich	11:44	4.0	-	-
Holyhead	10:00	5.7	22:24	5.6
Hull (Albert D)	6:02	8.5	18:10	8.8
Ilfracombe	5:40	9.2	18:02	9.3
King's Lynn	6:03	6.7	18:09	7.3
Leith	2:14	5.4	14:28	5.6
Liverpool	10:56	9.6	23:18	9.5
London Bridge	1:20	7.0	13:47	7.3
Lowestoft	9:21	2.4	21:18	2.5
Margate	11:55	4.8	-	-
Milford Haven	5:52	7.0	18:14	7.0
Newquay	4:44	7.0	17:06	7.0
Oban	5:33	4.1	17:52	3.9
Penzance	4:13	5.8	16:33	5.5
Portland	6:42	2.0	19:17	2.0
Portsmouth	10:56	4.6	23:24	4.7
Shoreham	10:51	6.2	23:18	6.4
Southampton	10:35	4.4	23:04	4.6
Swansea	6:01	12.4	18:22	12.4
Tees	3:24	9.8	15:31	10.0
Walton-On-Naze	11:33	4.2	23:48	4.2

All times GMT. Heights in metres.

Yesterday: highest day max: Hawarden, Flintshire, 18C (64F), lowest day max: St Bees Head, Cumbria, 8C (46F); highest rainfall: Luss, Isle Of Skye, 1.35in; highest sunshine: Bognor Regis, West Sussex, 10.5 hr





Dracula's dancing queen
Arts, page 35

THE TIMES



Rattle at his best
Arts, page 36

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

WEDNESDAY MARCH 17 1999

French offer up to $6bn for stake in troubled Japanese carmaker

Renault takes wheel at Nissan

FROM ADAM SAGE IN PARIS AND ADAM JONES



Schweitzer: veto power

RENAULT, the French carmaker, moved yesterday to become one of the world's big five manufacturers when it offered to buy a 35 per cent stake in Nissan, the troubled Japanese auto group.

The deal is likely to be worth between $4 billion and $6 billion (£2.5 billion to £3.7 billion). It raises questions over the long-term future of Nissan's factory in Sunderland, although most analysts expect the plant to survive.

The stake taken by Louis Schweitzer, the chairman of Renault, will give him veto power over Nissan and the likelihood of three seats on the Japanese company's board.

Carlos Ghosn, the second-in-command at Renault, who is given much of the credit for the French company's return to financial health, is tipped to become the director-general of Nissan.

The two carmakers are likely to share research and development costs in the short term and manufacturing plants in the longer term.

With Nissan, Japan's second-largest car manufacturer after Toyota, sagging under an excess production capacity, estimated at almost 500,000 vehicles a year. French analysts called into question the future of Nissan's Sunderland plant.

Commentators said M Schweitzer would not look kindly on a factory which produces cars that compete with Renault on the European market.

But Adam Collins, automobile analyst with Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, the securities house, said: "You have to bear in mind that the Sunderland plant is a trophy asset for Nissan in Europe."

The plant, which was opened 12 years ago, is widely seen as the most productive outside Japan. It employs 4,300 workers and turns out 289,000 cars a year. A further 800 workers are being recruited for the introduction of a new Almera model that will be made next year, raising production levels to about 350,000 annually. A Nissan spokesman insisted yesterday that the £215 million Almera investment is safe. Sunderland workers on the late shift were told about the alliance last night.

Renault and Nissan will have combined annual sales of more than 4.5 million vehicles, placing them on a par with Volkswagen and Toyota and behind General Motors and Ford, which recently bought Volvo, the Swedish niche manufacturer.

"I think this deal means you can put a tick in the two boxes that Renault needed to fill," said Mr Collins. "It will increase its size and have access to markets [in Asia and North America]."

But he said Renault, which made a profit of Fr9 billion (about £1 billion) last year, had taken a risk, given the scale of Nissan's debts of about £21 billion. If Nissan's share price continues to fall, M Schweitzer will emerge from the venture with burnt fingers.

For Nissan, which is losing market share in Japan and the US, the urgent need for a partner made it difficult to refuse the Gallic offer especially after DaimlerChrysler pulled out of talks last week, analysts said.

Although the French State still retains a 44 per cent stake in Renault, the firm's reputation for innovation and its recent success in cutting costs won the approval of Nissan's chairman, Yoshikazu Hanawa, according to sources in Tokyo.

Business Today



The long haul
UK truckers fly the flag of convenience
Page 29

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	6201.9	(-4.9)
Yield	2.56%	
FTSE All Share	2862.31	(-1.21)
Nikkei	16072.82	(+293.22)
New York:		
Dow Jones	9967.65	(+8.88)*
S&P Composite	1306.54	(+1.28)*

US RATE

Federal Funds	[illegible]*	([illegible])
Long bond	[illegible]*	([illegible])
Yield	5.48%*	(5.52%)

LONDON MONEY

3-mth interbank	[illegible]	([illegible])
Liffe long gilt future (Jun)	117.22	(116.64)

STERLING

New York:		
$	1.6248*	(1.6226)
London:		
$	1.6243	(1.6217)
€	1.4890	(1.4823)
SFr	2.3815	(2.3726)
Yen	191.45	(191.64)
£ Index	102.8	(102.3)

DOLLAR

London:		
€	1.0914*	(1.0943)
SFr	1.4557*	(1.4642)
Yen	117.83*	(117.58)
$ Index	108.0	(107.9)

Tokyo close Yen 117.88

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (Jun)	$12.75	(n/a)

GOLD

London close	$283.95	($289.95)

* denotes midday trading prices

Exchange rates ....Page 26

Dow Jones index scales landmark 10,000-point peak

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY AND ANDREW BUTCHER

SHARES on Wall Street yesterday cleared the 10,000 mark for the first time, capping a four-and-a-half-year bull run that has seen the market rise some 6,000 points.

It took just 20 minutes of trading for the Dow Jones industrial average to scale the final 42 points, reaching a peak of 10,001.12.

A cheer went up from the floor of the New York Stock Exchange and there was even some half-hearted confetti-throwing before traders returned to their posts.

The foray into uncharted territory, however, proved short-lived, with the Dow quickly falling back into negative territory as profit-takers took the landmark as a cue to move back into the market. By lunchtime in New York, the Dow was standing down 20 points on the day.

Analysts were divided on whether the Dow would continue to push on to new heights, with market bears arguing that every new Dow record brought a sharp correction closer.

Commentary 27

Lou Todd, head of equities trading at JC Bradford and Co, said: "There's not enough leadership to take this market to major new highs."

However, Ralph Acampora, the high-profile optimist from Prudential Securities, said: "This is the next leg of the bull market and it's led by quality. You can't get any better than that. There's nothing irrational about any of this."

Most analysts date the beginning of the Wall Street bull run back four and half years, with the market growing by 150 per cent across the period, boosted by a "golden scenario" of economic growth and low inflation.

Although the Dow cleared the 9,000 mark as far back as last April, the emerging markets crisis took its toll in the autumn, when the index slipped back below 7,500 in October.

Wall Street's later retreat yesterday, however, took its toll of European stock markets, which had otherwise weathered the mass resignation of the European Commission.

In London the FTSE 100 index of leading shares closed down 4.9 points at 6,201.9 after earlier rising by as much as 60 points. The currency markets also shrugged off the repercussions of the EU crisis. The euro climbed against the dollar from a low of $1.0810 to settle about $1.0935 and rose from 66.80p to 67.25p.

DOW POWERS ON

10,100
10,000
9,900
9,800
9,700
9,600
9,500
9,400
9,300
9,200
9,100
January February March
Source: Datastream



LINKS
WEBSITE: http://www.nyse.com

MIKE SEGAR / REUTERS



Cheers of traders at the historic moment later subsided as the Dow fell into negative territory

Surplus suggests Brown will beat forecasts

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY

THE Government recorded another healthy budget surplus in March, leaving the City convinced that the Chancellor will beat his revised full-year borrowing forecasts.

The Treasury, however, insisted that the traditional year-end departmental spending spree would leave the final figure close to the Budget prediction of a £5.2 billion surplus.

February's public sector net cash requirement (PSNCR) surplus of £1.5 billion was marginally below City expectations. However, the Government is in surplus to the tune of £15.13 billion over the first 11 months of the financial year, compared with just £6.18 billion at the same point last year.

Adam Cole, UK economist at HSBC, said the end-of-year spending spree would need to be £4 billion larger than in the same month last year for the Government to hit its target. Although spending has crept up over the past 12 months, it is only running about 2.5 per cent higher than in 1997-98.

Mr Cole said: "Gordon Brown could well find himself with considerably more room for manoeuvre in next year's Budget than his current arithmetic implies."

LINKS
WEBSITE: www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/
Weekend Money website:
http://www.times-money.co.uk

Unigate in Terranova hostile bid

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

UNIGATE, the food manufacturing group, has launched a hostile cash bid worth £228.5 million for Terranova, the chilled foods company that was spun off from Hillsdown last year.

Terranova immediately rejected the 125p share offer, calling it "an opportunistic bid designed to capture Terranova on the cheap". Shares in the company leapt from 104½p to 135½p, as investors bet on Unigate having to increase its offer. Unigate's shares were steady at 410½p.

Unigate has long been in pursuit of the Terranova business, having come close to buying it before its demerger from Hillsdown.

Sir Ross Buckland, chief executive of Unigate, said that acquiring Terranova would create a sizeable European foods business. "A standalone Terranova has uncertain prospects, while our cash offer represents certainty," he said.

Goldman partners in line for $7m

BY CAROLINE MERRELL, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

PARTNERS in Goldman Sachs, the US investment bank, will on average make $7 million (£4.2 million) each under the terms of the flotation, revealed yesterday.

Eleven per cent of the bank, worth a total of $3 billion, is to be sold off. About half of that, 5.5 per cent, is to be divided among the bank's 220 partners, who include Gavyn Davies, the bank's chief economist based in London and an adviser to the Prime Minister.

The amount each partner will get depends on their length of service. Partners will not be able to access their shares for between three and five years. It is as yet uncertain what proportion of the residual 89 per cent is held by each partner. It is these stakes that make each of the partners worth tens of millions of dollars.

About 2.5 per cent will be divided among the bank's other 13,000 employees, giving average windfalls of about £50,000. Another 1 per cent will be reserved for former partners of Goldman Sachs. The public will be offered about 1 per cent with the remainder, about 1 per cent, to be held by Sumitomo of Japan.

Shares in Goldman Sachs are expected to trade at about $40 to $50. The bank wants to raise capital so it can compete on a global scale with other US investment banks.

Goldman was forced to pull its flotation last year because of the sudden collapse in world markets.

At that time some within the bank voiced concerns about the flotation. They felt that it would change the unique culture of the bank. The original flotation plan did not give shares to all employees. Last week partners voted overwhelmingly in favour of the new flotation plan.

The details came as the bank reported first-quarter pre-tax earnings of $1.18 billion ($1 billion). Net revenues were $2.9 billion and expenses were $1.8 billion.

David Viniar, chief financial officer, said: "The firm's investment banking business performed well during the quarter particularly in financial advisory and debt underwriting, and assets under management continued to increase."

New policing move for the boys in Bluewater

BY PAUL ARMSTRONG

THE owners of the £1.2 billion Bluewater shopping complex in north Kent have struck a radical deal with the local constabulary, buying themselves the services of 22 police officers at a cost of £750,000 a year.

The contract with Kent police guarantees that at least six bobbies are on the beat at Bluewater at any one time. The service applies around the clock, seven days a week.

It is thought to be the first time a British police force has struck such an arrangement with the private sector, though officers are provided for a fee to police events that have potential for public disorder, such as football matches. Kent police also have an arrangement to provide a permanent presence at the Channel Tunnel.

Lend Lease, the developer behind the project, proposed the deal after its research found that shoppers preferred bobbies, particularly female ones, to provide security services. Stuart Hornery, chairman of Lend Lease, said that the annual fee would ensure Kent police broke even on the deal. Bluewater has also provided a police station at the complex.

Mr Hornery said that the developers involved the police heavily in planning Bluewater. A spokesman for Kent police said officers had provided advice on key crime prevention measures.

Developers, page 29

Tarmac aims to unlock value with demerger

By Christine Buckley
Industrial Correspondent

TARMAC yesterday pinned hopes of a share price surge on its plans to split the business into two companies. The demerger could be completed by the autumn.

The company is spinning off its construction services division from the traditional building materials business. The move was heralded last month after the failure of a £1.8 billion merger with Aggregate Industries.

Sir Neville Simms, who will lead the construction division as chairman and chief executive, said: "We will be able to unlock far more value by demerging." Shareholders will vote on the plans in the summer and the split should happen two months after that.

Sir Neville, currently group chief executive, said the demerger would not immediately lead to fresh merger moves with a rival. A number of other names, such as Amec and BICC's Balfour Beatty, have been linked with Tarmac, but Sir Neville said that no talks were under way.

However, analysts believe that the division will make would-be partners far more interested in Tarmac, whose share price has languished and which is seen as increasingly diverse as construction services moves further from the buildings side. Construction services comprises the higher-margin businesses of facilities management and the company's Private Finance Initiative work, which has been dogged by contract delays and bureaucratic procedures.

The building materials side of Tarmac will retain the company name and have Roy Harrison, the director in charge of that operation, as its chief executive, with Sir John Banham, the current Tarmac chairman, retaining his role.

Debt will be split between the two companies and both will have progressive dividend policies, Tarmac said. Tarmac said pre-tax profits for the year to December 31 rose to £131.4 million from £115.2 million. Earnings per share increased 10.7 per cent to 9.3p. The final dividend of 2.8p (2.65p) lifted the total 2.7 per cent to 5.8p.

Tempus, page 28



Sir Neville Simms said the demerger would not lead to fresh merger moves with a rival

Premier Oil under siege

By Carl Mortished

PREMIER OIL is under siege from a rebel shareholder group that wants the company to pull out of Burma and sell assets in other politically isolated countries, such as Albania and Cuba.

Peter Felter, a lawyer at Clyde & Co, has teamed up with Viscount Cranborne in a bid to launch a management takeover of the company whose chief executive is Charles Jamieson.

Mr Felter is proposing himself as chief executive and admits candidly: "I am trying to effect a shareholder rebellion." He reckons the Premier management's strategy has failed and objects to the Burmese investment on moral, financial and political grounds.

He said: "The political reality is the pro-democracy leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, has accused Premier of financially and morally supporting the regime. There are US sanctions against Burma and if the regime falls Premier could lose out badly." The rebels have created a website to publicise their proposals but have yet to requisition a meeting of sharholders.

Premier shares were unchanged at 13½p yesterday, against a 12-month high of 51p.

WEBSITE:www.premier-oil.co.uk

Capital in second casino writedown

By Jason Nissé

CAPITAL CORPORATION, the troubled gaming company, yesterday wrote down the value of one of its casinos and came under pressure to write down the values of its other two.

The group blamed the increase in gaming levy, made in the Budget last year, for a £2.5 million writedown in the value of the Cromwell Mint, the Kensington casino it bought two years ago for £22 million. This is the second writedown made by Capital since it bought Cromwell and cuts the carrying value to £18.2 million.

Analysts queried why the group had not also written down the value of its two other casinos, Crockford's and the Colony Club. Capital admitted that the clubs had been independently revalued this year.

The company declined to comment on revelations in *The Times* that its auditor, Deloitte & Touche, is being investigated by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of England & Wales over its work on Capital's accounts.

The combination of the Cromwell writedown, the increased gaming levy and an absence of high-rolling gamblers led to a fall in pre-tax profits from £12.4 million to £3.54 million in 1998. Earnings fell from 7.86p to 1.64p. A final dividend of 2p makes a total of 3p (5.125p) for the year.

De La Rue jobs go as demand slows

ABOUT 130 jobs in Britain are to be axed in a widespread restructuring at De La Rue, the banknote printing group. The company is shedding 500 jobs worldwide at its cash systems division, which designs and makes hole-in-the-wall machines and other cash-counting devices. The British jobs will be lost in Portsmouth, where the group is merging its two operations on to one site. The poorly performing division has been hit by slowing foreign demand.

Ian Much, chief executive, yesterday pledged that the move was the group's last big restructuring. Last year De La Rue announced 375 job losses in its main banknote-printing plant in Gateshead. Its cash-handling systems division currently accounts for about 40 per cent of group turnover. The total restructuring bill is to come to about £43.9 million, with a total cash cost of £30 million. De La Rue shares rose 7½p to 217½p.

Charter flags disposal

FURTHER restructuring lies ahead for Charter, the engineering business whose shares have halved to 381p from 779p over the past 12 months. Announcing a 3.6 per cent slide in underlying pre-tax profits to £85.1 million for 1998, the company said it wants to sell its specialised engineering business, which contributed operating profits of £28.9 million last year. Charter is holding the total dividend at 31.5p, with an unchanged final of 22p, despite a 2.8p fall in underlying earnings to 57.6p a share.

Coke bottler in red

Coca-Cola Beverages, the bottling company, said it was over the worst of the downturn in Eastern Europe as it returned a £15.5 million loss for 1998 (£24.1 million profit). It took a £10.3 million charge for hyper-inflation, £84.3 million for depreciation of equipment and £14.2 million for a factory closure. Underlying profits fell to £124 million (£133 million) with headline losses equating to 0.1p (1.5p earnings) per share. There is no dividend. The shares, floated eight months ago, fell 2½p to a low of 89p.

Chadburn agrees bid

THE board of Porter Chadburn, the label manufacturer, has agreed to a £46.6 million takeover offer from Mail-Well, the US-based printing company. The bid, at 38½p per share, represents a premium of 66 per cent of the closing price of Porter shares before yesterday's announcement. Although based in London, over 70 per cent of Porter's sales are in the US. The purchase is aimed at expanding Mail-Well's range of labels in North America.

Dickins's new label

ROB DICKINS, the millionaire music executive who discovered The Corrs and helped to relaunch Cher's career with *Believe*, her bestselling single, yesterday formed a joint venture record label with Sony Music called Instant Karma Records. Dickins, 48, who left his job last year as chairman of Warner Music in the UK — after a clash with his US bosses — turned down a more lucrative label deal with his former employers to work with Sony.

B&B launches defence

BRADFORD & BINGLEY yesterday launched a £5 million campaign in defence of its mutual status, after a resolution to convert the building society into a bank was tabled last year by self-confessed carpetbagger Stephen Major, supported by 70 other members. The society has sent out voting packs to its 2.5 million members, who must complete and return the forms by April 23 or attend the annual meeting on April 26.

EXCHANGE RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia $	2.70	2.52
Austria Sch	21.47	19.81
Belgium Fr	63.21	58.25
Canada $	2.608	2.420
Cyprus Cyp £	0.9051	0.8336
Denmark Kr	11.65	10.76
Egypt	5.75	5.14
Finland Mkk	9.40	8.65
France Fr	10.23	9.45
Germany Dm	3.073	2.831
Greece Dr	504	465
Hong Kong $	13.43	12.23
Iceland	129	109
Indonesia	17972	12972
Ireland Pt	1.2263	1.1373
Israel Shk	6.91	6.25
Italy Lira	3056	2819
Japan Yen	208.29	188.76
Malta	0.674	0.615
Netherlds Gld	3.470	3.175
New Zealand $	3.22	2.98
Norway Kr	13.31	12.37
Portugal Esc	310.82	288.79
S Africa Rd	10.80	9.85
Spain Pta	259.05	240.28
Sweden Kr	14.17	13.07
Switzerland Fr	2.533	2.315
Turkey Lira	607606	567220
USA $	1.732	1.589

Rates for small denomination banknotes only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

Rhodia on brink of £455m A&W victory

By Carl Mortished, International Business Editor

THE battle for Albright & Wilson appeared to be all but over yesterday when Rhodia, the French chemicals company, trumped a US bid for the phosphates group with a £455 million cash offer.

Rhodia has secured the support of Phillips & Drew Fund Management for its 145p-a-share offer, an 11 per cent premium to the 130p bid from Albemarle, announced earlier this month. PDFM has committed its 23 per cent stake to Rhodia unless a third party offers to pay more than 160p for its shares.

Analysts were sceptical that a higher offer would be forthcoming. Michael Eastwood, of Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, said: "I think it is over." He pointed to the synergy benefits available to Rhodia, which already has large phosphate interests. Albemarle is set to make a profit on the 18 per cent stake it has built up.

Rhodia's bid is being made through an off-balance-sheet vehicle, ISPG, which is wholly owned by Donau Chemie, an Austrian company formerly controlled by Rhodia. It is designed to keep the cost of the bid off the balance sheet of Rhone-Poulenc, Rhodia's 60 per cent shareholder. Rhone-Poulenc is currently in difficult merger discussions with Hoechst.

Peer buys Mirror's old HQ for £40m

By Raymond Snoddy, Media Editor

LORD Hamlyn of Edgeworth, the Labour-supporting publishing millionaire, has bought the former stamping ground of another of Labour's print tycoons, the late Robert Maxwell.

The Mirror Group, which is now based in the London Docklands, yesterday said that it had sold its old headquarters in the centre of the capital at Holborn, for £40 million.

A private company of Lord Hamlyn, 73, a former director of Reed International, in league with Chelsfield, the property group headed by Elliott Bernerd, has bought the site for £31 million in cash. They are also taking on £9 million of debt.

Detailed planning permission already exists for a new glass and steel building on the site designed by Sir Norman Foster & Partners.

The lettable area is about 320,000 sq ft and the building will provide a new headquarters for Andersen Consulting.

The new building, which is expected to cost about £135 million, is scheduled to be completed by March 2001.

The Mirror, which is currently under offer from two hostile bidders, is seeking to reduce debts and slim down to its core interests of national and regional newspapers.

Echoes of irrational exuberance



COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

Wall Street traders indulged in a bout of irrational exuberance as the Dow Jones index broke through 10,000 for the first time.

Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan was probably not joining in the cheering. It was over two years ago that he warned of the dangers of the stock market over-heating, coining the phrase which will now be permanently appended to his name. Just as Jim Callaghan has never been able to throw off the image of him cheerily remarking "Crisis? What crisis?" as the emergency squad from the IMF headed to Britain, Greenspan's hang-dog visage will always be seen mouthing a warning against the market's "irrational exuberance".

Yet when he first started to voice his concern, the Dow stood at just 6,400. Some investors were not paying attention. Since it started this bull run four years ago, the US index has grown by 160 per cent. Faced with such defiance, Mr Greenspan has become more muted in his qualms but, if he felt uneasy in 1997, there is every reason why he should feel even more so now.

The levels of US share prices are as sustainable as yogic flying. The performance of corporate America does not justify price levels which see even non-Internet stocks selling at 40 times earnings and yields which barely register on the payout scale. Mr Greenspan does not want to be seen as a scaremonger but he did mention in his evidence to the Senate Banking Committee last month that "Equity prices are high enough to raise questions about whether shares are overvalued."

Mr Greenspan is obviously not convinced that we have entered that wonderful world of the new paradigm in which the old rules do not apply. He is suspicious about the dawning of a new age, free of booms and busts, where markets head ever upwards, and we all join hands in a virtuous circle of increased investment, higher productivity, higher wages and increased asset prices.

The chairman of the Fed is a realist not an idealist. America has a huge market of its own but it cannot remain immune from what goes on in the rest of the world. The Asian crisis may have bottomed but the climb out of depression will take several years. The Latin American mess is far from settled. In the meantime, these countries have excess supply and promise intense competition. Corporate profits in the US will show the strain and it is by no means certain that investors will shrug their shoulders and say that they are there for the long term. so far, US savers have demonstrated remarkably strong nerves but they are stretched taut now. Some may see the magical 10,000 as the point at which to take their handsome profits and run for cover.

When that happens, London will feel the chill. The FTSE has been pulled along in the wake of the Dow and will not be able to resist the tug when it heads in the opposite direction. Optimists maintain that the weight of money looking for a home will ensure both markets remain strong. But they said the same about Japan.

EU agenda slips its 2000 deadline

The plan is not working. German ministers should have begun trolling round the EU yesterday to drum up support for Agenda 2000, the package of budgetary and voting reform to prepare the way for the next lot of entrants. Instead, having introduced each other to their new Finance Minister, they were scurrying around wondering what you do when the entire Commission resigns.

Budget talks were already getting not very far slowly, having agreed another mind-numbing compromise on farm protection that requires yet higher subsidy spending. Even touchier ground was about to be broached, including the fate of Britain's rebate.

Outgoing commissioners already complain that they did not have enough money to tackle an ever-rising workload properly, let alone to root out fraud. Given that mismanagement, few member states are likely to be keen to increase the budget even by the £20 billion allowed under the most recent dispensation. Better for the Commission to do less.

Some are already casting envious glances at the eventual £11 billion a year reserved for new entrants. Put off enlargement and you could divert most of that.

Who should pay more is even more contentious. Charles Jenkins, who yesterday launched a pamphlet on the issue for the Federal Trust, says that Britain should give up its special rebate. Instead, he wants a general rebate system. The net contributions of each of the wealthier members would be balanced by a general adjustment so that they corresponded roughly with national income.

As even Mr Jenkins concedes, Tony Blair cannot afford to "give in" over the UK rebate if he wants to entice his flock into the euro. Likewise, any general rebate system would require statesman-like and courageous gestures from the big net gainers, notably France. In other words, it would be extremely expensive.

The French Government may be prepared to send Edith Cresson to the guillotine, provided that the President of the Commission remains a francophone. It is not likely to hand back all those farm subsidies from German industry that begat the EU.

The German presidency may not instal a new Commission until its mandate ends in June. Amid all this delay, confusion and excitement, the chances of the rump Commission and the Council of Ministers agreeing a new budgetary system by then look slim. So the whole muddle will have to be handed on to the Finnish presidency and a "new" Commission, if there is one.

Those waiting to enter the EU for the new millennium may be knocking on the door until their knuckles are sore.

End of the track for Nissan

Nissan should not rely on Gallic generosity either. France invented the "yellow peril" scare a century ago, and the French motor industry has been Japan's biggest enemy in Europe. A link with Renault would be no more than unconditional surrender for Japan's indebted number two motor manufacturer. This is an example of defeat rather than consolidation in the global motor industry.

For Renault, perhaps this was the only way to become a global player. European firms have learned the hard way that mergers with French companies are always takeovers. Renault was an even less desirable partner than Peugeot-Citroen because the French Government still controls Renault, making any partner an outpost of the French State. That is why Volvo shareholders threw out a merger with Renault but accepted a takeover by Ford.

Nissan has even had to accept the French way of business. Renault will take full control through a minority share stake, maximising its power for the minimum equity capital. Both debt and excess capacity plague Nissan. That immediately raises fears over the Japanese company's pioneering plant in Sunderland. For Renault, it should have no future. Logically, European production should eventually be consolidated in France.

Fortunately, Sunderland is the most efficient car plant in the UK and probably the best in Europe. It should be the conduit to transfer modern manufacturing methods to France. But don't count beyond five years.

Carpet tax

THE Bradford & Bingley Building Society showed it was not afraid of change when it dropped Mr Bradford and Mr Bingley from its corporate identity. But the board is desperate that the B&B should remain a mutual and not surrender to carpetbaggers, and it is spending £5 million to encourage its members to agree. The principle of directors spending shareholders' money to persuade them that the board knows best is not new. Yet the rebranding exercise cost just £10 million. Clearly the B&B feels its members will take some persuading to forgo the windfalls.

Bodycote shares fall on warning

By Paul Armstrong

SHARES of Bodycote International fell more than 10 per cent to 890p yesterday even though the metal processing group announced a 49 per cent jump in 1998 pre-tax profits to £76.2 million.

The shares were adversely affected by the company's warning that the slowdown experienced in its Scandinavian and US operations towards the end of last year was continuing. It said that this was an indirect result of the Asian conomic crisis.

Analysts said that some unrealistic earnings expectations and a bout of profit-taking were also to blame for the fall. The shares peaked at £12.82 in May 1998.

John Chesworth, chief executive, said acquisitions had provided almost two thirds of the profit increase, although organic growth levels were still strong. However, he said that Bodycote would be unable to find sufficient purchases this year to repeat that growth rate.

The company spent £77 million on acquisitions last year, the bulk of which were merged into Bodycote's heat treatment operations. The division reported an 83 per cent jump in pre-tax profit to £20.8 million.

Mr Chesworth said that although Bodycote's gearing remained less than 10 per cent, he had no intention of pursuing a share buyback. Bodycote shares would have to be half their current price to consider such a move, he said. Instead, the company would focus on capital investment as a means of generating organic growth.

Mr Chesworth said that Bodycote's ability to cut costs quickly in response to demand fluctuations had limited the impact of the Asian malaise on its margins.

Bodycote also announced that it would undertake a five-for-two share split to increase its market liquidity and reduce share price volatility.

A final dividend of 7.75p was declared, making a total of 12p for the year (9.1p).

Tempus, page 28

Telewest doubles earnings

By Raymond Snoddy

TELEWEST, the UK's largest cable television supplier by number of subscribers, reported a near doubling in earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation to £146 million for 1998.

For the year, Telewest, enlarged by the purchase of General Cable and the mopping up of Birmingham Cable, increased revenues by 39.5 per cent to £539.2 million.

"The results reflect our focus on customer sales, service and marketing," said Tony Illsley, chief executive, who joined Telewest last year from Walkers Crisps.

The emphasis on marketing at Telewest was underlined yesterday by the appointment of 32-year-old Philip Jansen as group marketing director.

The enlarged company made a pro-forma net loss of £341 million against £430 million in 1997.

Tempus, page 28

Computer reseller 37% ahead

By Chris Ayres

COMPUTACENTER, the computer reseller and services group whose shares failed to recover from the IT sector crash last summer, yesterday repaired some of the damage by reporting a 37 per cent rise in pre-tax profits for 1998 to £64.6 million.

The company, which supplies computer systems to large corporations, reported a 40 per cent rise in sales to £1.6 billion. However, net margins slipped from 4.6 per cent to 4.2 per cent.

The results saw shares in the company rise 23½p to 523½p. However, they remain well below the company's flotation price of 670p.

Computacenter will pay a maiden final dividend of 2.5p a share, up from 2p, on May 21. Philip Hulme, the Computacenter chairman, said that prospects for the group in 1999 "remained strong".

Tempus, page 28

Kalon maintains payout despite slip

KALON GROUP, the UK paints company that is considering a £500 million bid approach by Total, the French oil company, is maintaining the total dividend for 1998 despite a fall in pre-tax profits to £37 million from £45.2 million (Martin Barrow writes).

The fall was blamed on competition in the market for paints and coatings, aggravated by the strength of the pound. Turnover was little changed at £474.3 million, compared with £472 million in 1997. The dividend stays at 6.2p.

Mike Hennessy, Kalon's managing director, said: "During the year we experienced increasingly difficult market conditions. However, we still managed to produce margins that were considerably better than those of European competitors."

Total already holds a 63 per cent interest in Kalon.



JJB jumps on talk of a management buyout

SHARES of JJB Sports enjoyed one of their sharpest one-day rises yesterday amid rumours that David Whelan, founder and chairman, is planning to take the sports chain private.

The shares jumped 9.4 per cent to an eight-month high of 425p on word that JJB's management — which already owns 51.4 per cent of the company — is trying to raise the money to buy the rest.

However, David Greenwood, JJB's finance director, categorically denied the rumours as "absolute nonsense". City retail analysts agreed saying JJB could not take on more debt while still digesting its ill-timed acquisition of rival Sports Division.

One said: "The shares are being moved by good, old-fashioned stock shortage — so this bizarre rumour is being fed into a very tight market."

Other dealers said that the shares were still almost half last year's 820p high, which makes it vulnerable to a takeover.

All this added up a share rise which made JJB London's best-performing share among larger stocks, as blue chips were sidelined by disappointment that the Dow Jones industrial average had only managed to tiptoe above the 10,000 threshold before profit-taking set in. The FTSE 100 ended 4.9 points lower at 6,201.9.

COLT Telecom led a resurgence among the telecoms stocks, which overcame much of the ground lost when Veba sold its 10.2 per cent stake in **Cable & Wireless** on Monday.

COLT was the best performer in the FTSE 100, up 6 per cent to 995½p. Among second-line telecom stocks, **Fibernet** was 11½p stronger at 459p, and **Energis** 25p better at £14.85. Cable & Wireless itself gave up earlier gains to close ½p down at 750½p.

The £455 million bid for **Albright & Wilson**, 10½p better at 148p, by Rhodia of France led dealers to wonder where Albemarle of the US — which has been left at the altar with its £408 million bid — may look next.

Yule Catto was one suspect, 16½p better at 305p. Other targets mentioned were **Scapa**, 2p lighter at 113p. **Meconic** was 2½p stronger at 120p as directors spent £52,200 buying shares at 120p.

Psion added another 8.7 per cent to 935p on City approval of the deal between its Symbian associates and NTT of Japan.



Richard Marton, chief executive of Britax International, up 8p to 140½p on the back of strong preliminary results

Britax International was a strong riser, up 8p to 140½p on strong preliminary results.

Game, the recently floated computer games retailer whose shares have never bettered their 230p issue price, has revived thanks to a bid approach from rival **Electronics Boutique**. It was 4½p better at 133½p. Word in the City, however, is that the deal could soon be off. Electronics Boutique's institutional investors, the story goes, have told the company that it should save its cash to buy large edge-of-town shopping sites or snap up its European counterparts.

Electronics Boutique shares have fallen 15 per cent since talks were announced but finished all square at 77¾p yesterday. Dealers believe that if it walks, Game shares will fall sharply and EB will recover.

Meanwhile, there are whispers that **Gremlin Group**, off ¼p at 133½p, is looking at a 130p-a-share offer from **Eidos**, 15p better at £15.40. Gremlin said in January that it had been approached.

First Choice, which has agreed to an all-share merger with Kuoni, was off another 12p to 161p. In Zurich, Kuoni's shares have fallen 10 per cent since it announced the deal. This decreases the value of the bid, and many UK punters are selling rather than wait for the new London-listed Kuoni Holdings to be created.

UK Land, which owns the Elephant and Castle shopping centre in South London, continued its dazzling rise, adding 11p to 118½p — making a 48 per cent rise on the week. This was traced back to the decision by the London Borough of Lambeth's decision to redevelop the 170-acre site.

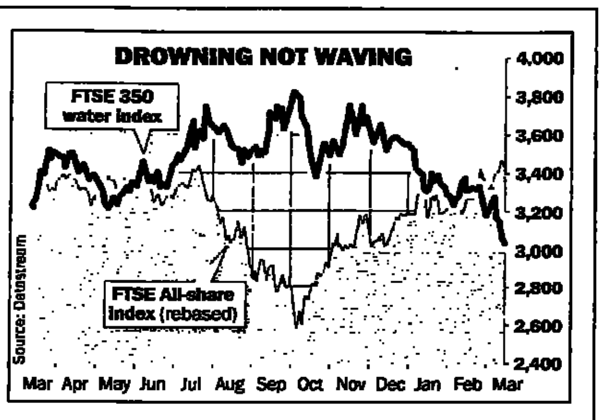
The Elephant & Castle site has a book value of £17.5 million. Even after yesterday's rise, UK Land is capitalised at £10.6 million. Dealers think any deal would push its shares further into orbit.

Neville Buch, the former chairman of exhibitions group Blenheim, was moving markets again today on whispers that he is about to activate **Somic**, a shell company in which he has a 17.2 per cent stake. Its shares jumped 32 per cent, to 105p, on word that he will reverse another company into Somic in the next few weeks.

On the Alternative Investment Market, dealers were stocking up on **Datrontech** — a penny better at 26p — on hopes that its finals later this month will show much better results than expected.

□ **GILT-EDGED:** Gilts ended with solid gains in light trading. Longs outperformed shorts as Treasury 8 per cent 2003 advanced 6p to £112.34, while Treasury 8 per cent 2015 jumped 76p to £138.84.

□ **NEW YORK:** The Dow Jones industrial average topped the 10,000 level for the first time in early trading before profit taking wiped out most of the gains. At midday it was up 8.88 points to 9,967.65.



EVER since London's shares started to recover from last summer's nose-dive, the water companies have suffered.

Severn Trent is now 27 per cent off its peak, Thames Water has fallen 23 per cent and Anglian Water is down 26 per cent.

Their charge: being boring, predictable companies in a market suddenly full of excitement.

They were ideal for shelter when the rest of the market was in turmoil, but are no fun now things have picked up again. The water companies were always expected to lose their appeal as safety stocks, but few expected them to lose a quarter of their value.

Where will this alarming decline end? There was certainly no respite yesterday, with only two risers among the 22 quoted water companies.

Fund managers say this money is now chasing the bombed-out engineering sector and other long-neglected cyclical companies. The worst is not over yet.

New York (midday):

Dow Jones	9967.65 (+8.88)
S&P Composite	1308.54 (+1.26)

Tokyo:

Nikkei Average	16072.82 (+293.22)

Hong Kong:

Hang Seng	10911.25 (+74.39)

Amsterdam:

AEX Index	540.64 (+5.59)

Sydney:

AO	2992.2 (+2.7)

Frankfurt:

DAX	5094.63 (+65.39)

Singapore:

Straits	1489.54 (-4.65)

Brussels:

BEL20	3348.24 (+4.44)

Paris:

CAC-40	4186.35 (+1.23)

Zurich:

SMI Index	7218.9 (-22.0)

London:

FT 30	3778.0 (-5.4)
FTSE 100	6201.9 (-4.9)
FTSE 250	5519.7 (+0.8)
FTSE 350	2957.5 (-1.9)
FTSE Eurotop 100	2907.97 (+11.51)
FTSE All-Share	2862.31 (-1.21)
FTSE Non Financials	2878.12 (-8.52)
FTSE Fixed Interest	154.24 (+0.27)
FTSE Govt Secs	115.72 (+0.49)
Bargains	98181
SEAQ Volume	1110.8m
US$	1.6242 (+0.0026)
Euro	0.6715 (-0.0034)
£:SDR	n/a
Exchange Index	102.8 (+0.5)

Bank of England official close (4pm)

RPI	163.4 Jan (2.4%) Jan 1987=100
RPIX	161.8 Jan (2.6%) Jan 1987=100

Axon Group	291½	+ 22
Enhanced Zero Trust	99¾	...
Gander Properties	7¼	- ¼
Gartmore High Cnv Pr	106¼	...
Gartmore High Income	102½	...
Jupiter En Zero Dv Pf	106	- ¼
Jupiter Enhanced Inc	100	...
Luminar Warrants	250	- 20
NBA Quantum	110	...
Sports Internet	132½	- 6
Synstar	137	- 1

First Tech Cnv Prf n/p (320)	15	- 1
Oxford Biomedica n/p (15)	9	- 3
Waste Recycling n/p (406)	89	...

RISES:

Stock	Close	Chng	Chng%
Porter Chadbrn	37¼	+ 14	+ 60.2
Water Hall	26½	+ 7	+ 35.8
Somic	105	+ 25	+ 31.2
Terranova	135½	+ 31	+ 29.6
Diploma	149	+ 20½	+ 15.9
Eclipse Blinds	112½	+ 15	+ 15.3
Nsb Retail Sys	300	+ 40	+ 15.3
Scotia	88	+ 11	+ 14.2
Cornwell Prkr	83½	+ 10	+ 13.6
Ashton	24¼	+ 2½	+ 11.4
Brooks Service	116½	+ 12	+ 11.4
Ind Control	17	+ 1¾	+ 11.4
Mountview	2218¾	+ 228⅛	+ 11.4
Bett Bros	156	+ 16	+ 11.4
UK Land	118½	+ 11	+ 10.2
JJB Sports	425	+ 36½	+ 9.3
Psion	935	+ 75	+ 8.7
Ramsdens (H)	132½	+ 10	+ 8.1
Axon Group	291½	+ 22	+ 8.1
Minorco	1087½	+ 81¼	+ 8.0

FALLS:

Stock	Close	Chng	Chng%
Kalsey Ind	310	-125	- 28.7
ASW	11½	- 2¾	- 19.2
Mayborn	34½	- 8	- 18.8
Hi-Tec Sports	15½	- 2½	- 13.8
Creighton	13	- 2	- 13.3
Oliver (G)	13½	- 2	- 12.9
Durban	152¼	- 21¼	- 12.2
Systems Intl	52½	- 7	- 11.7
Superscape VR	133½	- 15½	- 10.4
Inner Workings	17½	- 2	- 10.2
Brit Biotech	16	- 1¾	- 9.8
Bodycote	890	- 92½	- 9.4
Mandarin Orntl	39	- 3¾	- 8.7
Jasmin	101½	- 8½	- 7.7

More than a pipe dream

A YEAR or so ago you could hardly have given Telewest shares away. After all, the cable industry was a notorious underperformer that rarely met its targets, faced unremitting opposition from satellite and was trying to sell a consumer product without any apparent interest in good marketing.

In a sense it was always going to be a long job and the true impact of cable can only be judged in the early years of the next century when networks are complete and digital services and fast modems are widely available.

But for companies such as Telewest the balance has already shifted. New, inexpensive television/telephony packages have been introduced, senior managers with premier league marketing experience have been appointed and the necessary consolidation has taken place.

In 12 months the Telewest share price has tripled — a nice return for those who always believed in the long-term potential.

It is equally clear that the long-term future of cable is attractive mainly because it is future-proof. However the technology changes, a good cable company will be able to deliver whatever there is down a single pipe into the home or business. True video on demand — ordering the film you want to see from a library of several hundred and watching it immediately — is not far away.

The tricky bit is forecasting the near-term future of Telewest's share price. Above-average growth is likely to continue through better marketing and cutting disconnections but for the patient Telewest really could make a lot of sense after the year 2002. A strong hold.

Computacenter

IT IS now widely accepted that Computacenter managed to float at 670p a share only because the City failed to appreciate how much of its business comprised low-margin resale and distribution.

This resulted in a drastic downgrading of the shares in the aftermath of the flotation, from which it began to recover only last month. The shares were hit again, however, following reports of slow sales from US computer manufacturers, such as Dell.

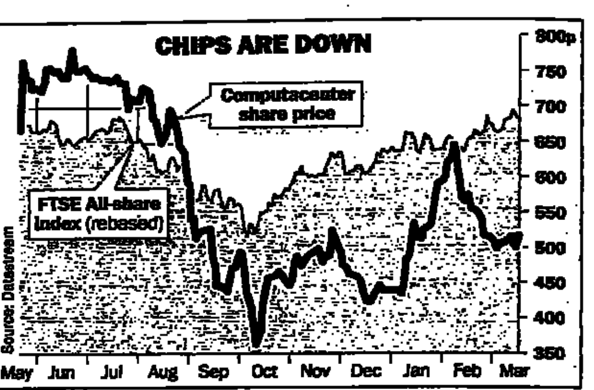
Given yesterday's strong results, Computacenter's shares may look cheap to some investors at 523½p but they are no bargain.

In the long term, the company is unlikely to raise its margins much above 5 per cent from the current 4.2 per cent.

Computacenter also faces a threat from direct selling, a practice made popular by Dell, which involves manufacturers supplying customers directly to bypass the likes of Computacenter, providing support services through third parties.

Computacenter argues that if direct selling becomes the norm, it will simply concentrate on its higher-margin services activities. However, Computacenter's services business is closely woven into its reselling division, and the company has not yet proven its ability to operate a pure services business.

These problems are also likely to face Morse, Computacenter's upmarket rival, which floats next week. Investors should treat both companies with caution.



Tarmac

THE FAILED £1.8 billion merger between Tarmac and Aggregate Industries caused dismay in the City. But the proposed demerger of Tarmac's two businesses building materials and construction services should do much to enhance shareholder value.

Some analysts believe the demerger could value the Tarmac operation at 150p a share — an increase of 30 per cent on yesterday's closing price of 115½p.

Construction services was the part of the Tarmac business that Aggregate Industries was not interested in. After the demerger the new-look Tarmac will look more attractive both to Aggregate Industries and other potential suitors.

The building materials division will also have a new lease on life with its management. Sir Neville Simms, who was heavily criticised for the failure of the Aggregate merger, is to head up construction while the building materials side will be led by Roy Harrison, currently a Tarmac director in charge of materials.

Tarmac has been unloved by investors for some time. The demerger, which is expected to be completed by the autumn, will rekindle enthusiasm. Hold.

Bodycote Int

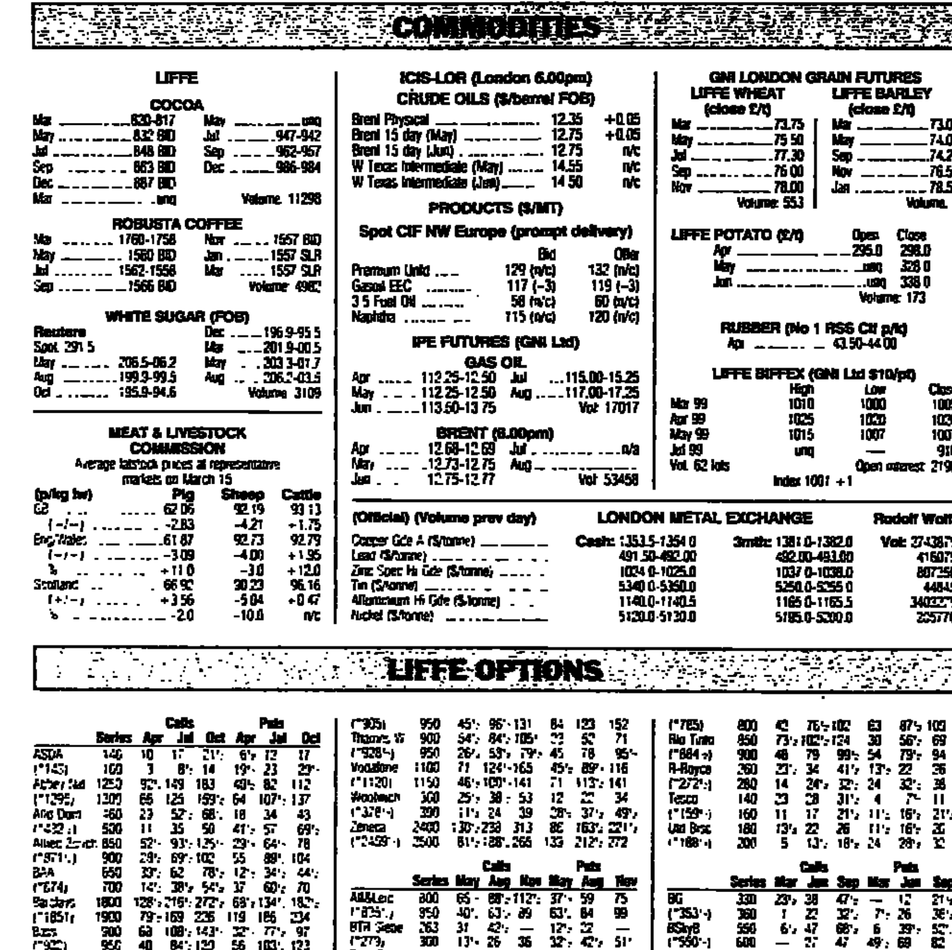
JOHN CHESWORTH, Bodycote chief executive, would be excused for having a strong drink last night. The company met the bulk of market expectations with a 49 per cent rise in pre-tax profit and investors responded by wiping £100 million off the group's value.

Granted, Mr Chesworth made the market a touch nervous by warning of a slowdown in its Scandinavian and US operations. The move introduced the dreaded spectre of Asia into Bodycote's outlook. Some nimble footwork appears to have enabled the company to cut costs in response to the downturn, helping to protect its margins, but the overall tone sounded all too familiar to some investors.

His words of caution appear to have overshadowed some other valid points. These include the fact that, despite the push towards outsourcing, 80 per cent of the market in which Bodycote operates is still met by in-house services. This will almost certainly be a source of strong organic growth for the company for many years.

The shares closed yesterday on a prospective earnings multiple of less than 15, about 30 per cent below the market average.

Gearing of less than 10 per cent leaves scope for further acquisitions. The growth prospects remain attractive despite the notes of caution, making the stock a buy at yesterday's price.



COMMODITIES

LIFFE

COCOA

Mar	820-817	May	unq
May	832 BID	Jul	947-942
Jul	848 BID	Sep	962-957
Sep	863 BID	Dec	986-984
Dec	887 BID		
Mar	unq		Volume 11298

ROBUSTA COFFEE

Mar	1760-1758	Nov	1557 BID
May	1580 BID	Jan	1557 SLR
Jul	1562-1558	Mar	1557 SLR
Sep	1566 BID		Volume 4982

WHITE SUGAR (FOB)

Reuters		Dec	196.9-95.5
Spot: 291.5		Mar	201.9-00.5
May	206.5-06.2	May	203.3-01.7
Aug	199.9-99.5	Aug	206.2-03.5
Oct	195.9-94.6		Volume 3109

MEAT & LIVESTOCK COMMISSION

Average fatstock prices at representative markets on March 15

(p/kg lw)	Pig	Sheep	Cattle
GB	62.06	92.19	93.13
(+/-)	-2.83	-4.21	+1.75
Eng/Wales	61.87	92.73	92.79
(+/-)	-3.09	-4.00	+1.95
%	+11.0	-3.0	+12.0
Scotland	66.90	90.23	96.16
(+/-)	+3.56	-5.04	+0.47
%	-2.0	-10.0	n/c

ICIS-LOR (London 6.00pm)

CRUDE OILS ($/barrel FOB)

Brent Physical	12.35	+0.05
Brent 15 day (May)	12.75	+0.05
Brent 15 day (Jun)	12.75	n/c
W Texas Intermediate (May)	14.55	n/c
W Texas Intermediate (Jun)	14.50	n/c

PRODUCTS ($/MT)

Spot CIF NW Europe (prompt delivery)

	Bid	Offer
Premium Unld	129 (n/c)	132 (n/c)
Gasoil EEC	117 (-3)	119 (-3)
3.5 Fuel Oil	58 (n/c)	60 (n/c)
Naphtha	115 (n/c)	120 (n/c)

IPE FUTURES (GNI Ltd)

GAS OIL

Apr	112.25-12.50	Jul	115.00-15.25
May	112.25-12.50	Aug	117.00-17.25
Jun	113.50-13.75		Vol: 17017

BRENT (6.00pm)

Apr	12.68-12.69	Jul	n/a
May	12.73-12.75	Aug	
Jun	12.75-12.77		Vol: 53458

GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES

LIFFE WHEAT (close £/t)		LIFFE BARLEY (close £/t)	
Mar	73.75	Mar	73.00
May	75.50	May	74.00
Jul	77.30	Sep	74.25
Sep	76.00	Nov	76.50
Nov	78.00	Jan	78.50
Volume: 553		Volume: 0	

LIFFE POTATO (£/t)

	Open	Close
Apr	295.0	298.0
May	unq	328.0
Jun	unq	338.0
		Volume: 173

RUBBER (No 1 RSS Cif p/k)

Apr 43.50-44.00

LIFFE BIFFEX (GNI Ltd $10/pt)

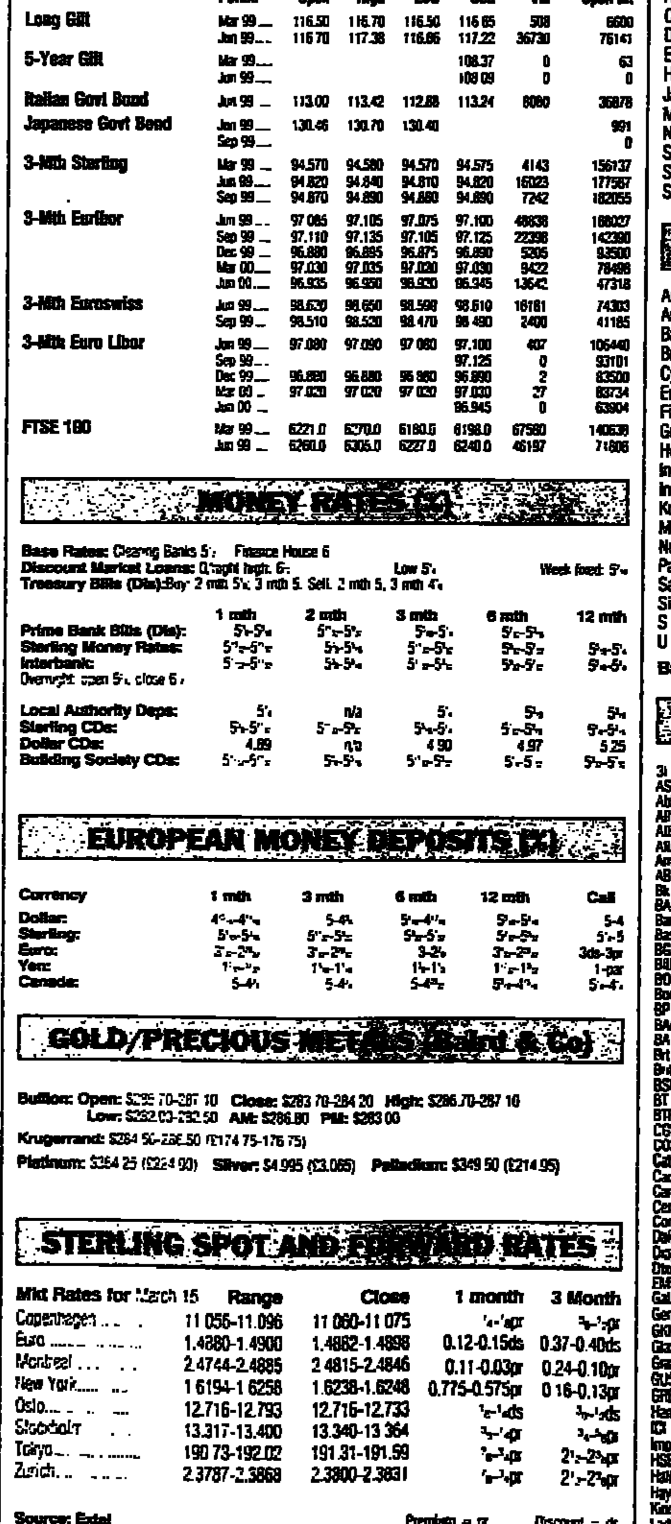
	High	Low	Close
Mar 99	1010	1000	1005
Apr 99	1025	1020	1030
May 99	1015	1007	1007
Jul 99	unq	—	910
Vol: 62 lots			Open interest: 2190

Index 1001 +1

LONDON METAL EXCHANGE (Official) (Volume prev day) Rudolf Wolff

	Cash	3mth	Vol
Copper Gde A ($/tonne)	1353.5-1354.0	1381.0-1382.0	2743875
Lead ($/tonne)	491.50-492.00	492.00-493.00	416075
Zinc Spec Hi Gde ($/tonne)	1024.0-1025.0	1037.0-1038.0	807350
Tin ($/tonne)	5340.0-5350.0	5250.0-5255.0	44845
Aluminium Hi Gde ($/tonne)	1140.0-1140.5	1165.0-1165.5	3403275
Nickel ($/tonne)	5120.0-5130.0	5185.0-5200.0	235776

LIFFE OPTIONS



LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol	Open Int
Long Gilt	Mar 99	116.50	116.70	116.50	116.65	508	6600
	Jun 99	116.70	117.38	116.86	117.22	36730	76141
5-Year Gilt	Mar 99				108.37	0	63
	Jun 99				109.09	0	0
Italian Govt Bond	Jun 99	113.00	113.42	112.88	113.24	8080	36878
Japanese Govt Bond	Jun 99	130.46	130.70	130.40			991
	Sep 99						0
3-Mth Sterling	Mar 99	94.570	94.580	94.570	94.575	4143	156137
	Jun 99	94.820	94.840	94.810	94.820	16023	177587
	Sep 99	94.870	94.890	94.880	94.890	7242	182055
3-Mth Euribor	Jun 99	97.085	97.105	97.075	97.100	48838	188027
	Sep 99	97.110	97.135	97.105	97.125	22398	142390
	Dec 99	96.880	96.895	96.875	96.890	5205	93500
	Mar 00	97.030	97.035	97.020	97.030	9422	78498
	Jun 00	96.935	96.950	96.920	96.945	13642	47318
3-Mth Euroswiss	Jun 99	98.630	98.650	98.598	98.610	16161	74303
	Sep 99	98.510	98.520	98.470	98.490	2400	41185
3-Mth Euro Libor	Jun 99	97.080	97.090	97.080	97.100	407	106440
	Sep 99				97.125	0	93101
	Dec 99	96.880	96.880	96.880	96.890	2	83500
	Mar 00	97.020	97.020	97.020	97.030	27	83734
	Jun 00				96.945	0	63904
FTSE 100	Mar 99	6221.0	6270.0	6180.5	6198.0	67580	140638
	Jun 99	6260.0	6305.0	6227.0	6240.0	46197	71806

MONEY RATES (%)

Base Rates: Clearing Banks 5½ Finance House 6
Discount Market Loans: O/night high: 6½ Low 5¼ Week fixed: 5¾
Treasury Bills (Dis): Buy: 2 mth 5⅛; 3 mth 5. Sell: 2 mth 5, 3 mth 4⅞

	1 mth	2 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
Prime Bank Bills (Dis):	5⅛-5¼	5[illegible]	5[illegible]	5[illegible]	
Sterling Money Rates:	5[illegible]	5[illegible]	5[illegible]	5[illegible]	5[illegible]
Interbank:	5[illegible]	5[illegible]	5[illegible]	5[illegible]	5[illegible]

Overnight: open 5¼, close 6½

	1 mth	2 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
Local Authority Deps:	5¼	n/a	5¼	5[illegible]	5[illegible]
Sterling CDs:	5[illegible]	5[illegible]	5[illegible]	5[illegible]	5[illegible]
Dollar CDs:	4.89	n/a	4.90	4.97	5.25
Building Society CDs:	5[illegible]	5[illegible]	5[illegible]	5[illegible]	5[illegible]

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)

Currency	1 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth	Call
Dollar:	[illegible]	5-4¾	[illegible]	[illegible]	5-4
Sterling:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	5¼-5
Euro:	[illegible]	[illegible]	3-2¾	[illegible]	3ds-3pr
Yen:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	1-par
Canada:	5-4½	5-4¾	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

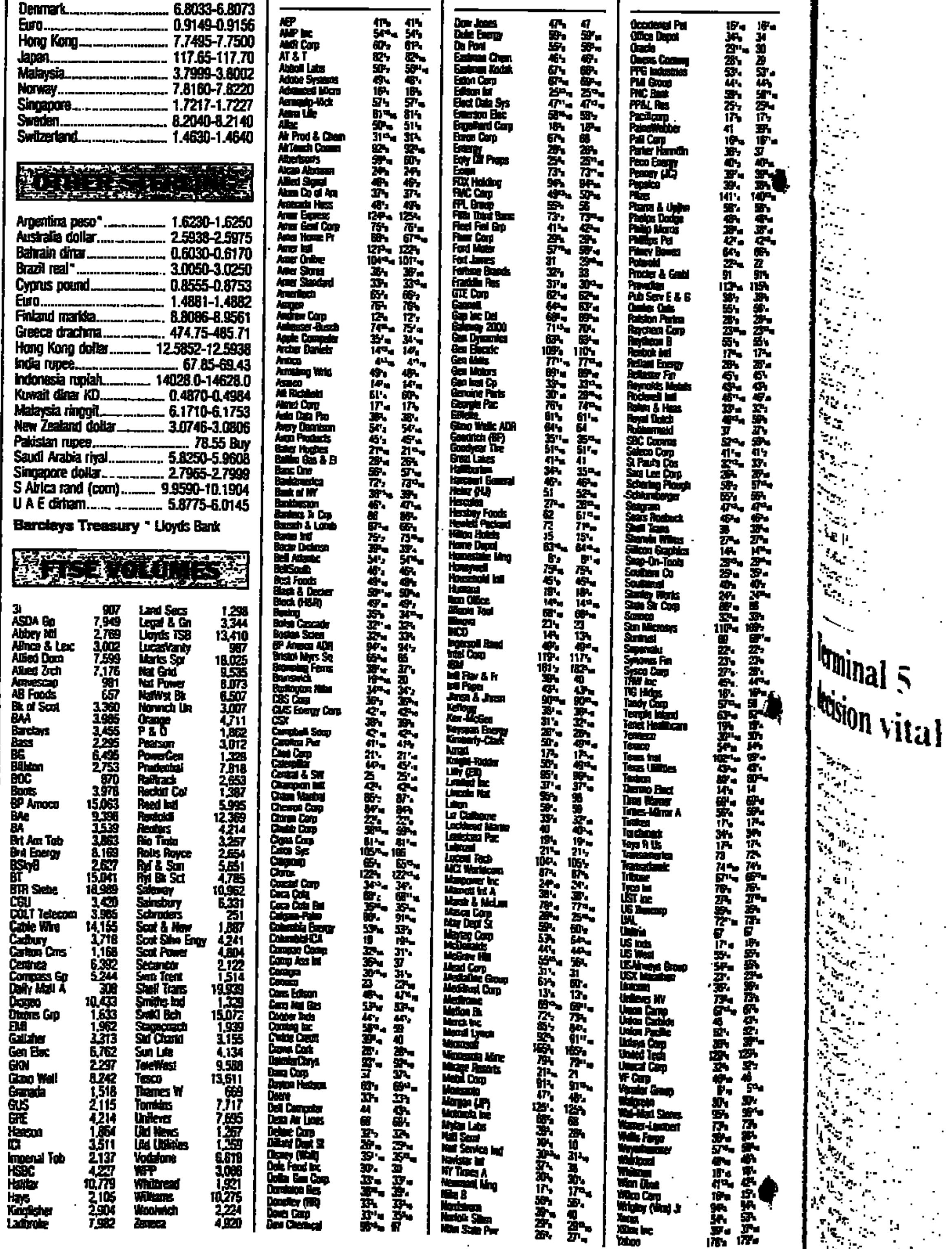
GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS (Baird & Co)

Bullion: Open: $286.70-287.10 **Close:** $283.70-284.20 **High:** $286.70-287.10
Low: $282.00-282.50 **AM:** $286.80 **PM:** $283.00
Krugerrand: $284.50-286.50 (£174.75-176.75)
Platinum: $364.25 (£224.90) **Silver:** $4.995 ($3.065) **Palladium:** $349.50 (£214.95)

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

Mkt Rates for March 15	Range	Close	1 month	3 Month
Copenhagen	11.056-11.096	11.060-11.075	[illegible]	[illegible]
Euro	1.4880-1.4900	1.4882-1.4898	0.12-0.15ds	0.37-0.40ds
Montreal	2.4744-2.4885	2.4815-2.4846	0.11-0.03pr	0.24-0.10pr
New York	1.6194-1.6258	1.6238-1.6248	0.775-0.575pr	0.16-0.13pr
Oslo	12.716-12.793	12.716-12.733	[illegible]	[illegible]
Stockholm	13.317-13.400	13.340-13.364	[illegible]	[illegible]
Tokyo	190.73-192.02	191.31-191.59	[illegible]	2½-2¾pr
Zurich	2.3787-2.3868	2.3800-2.3831	[illegible]	2½-2¾pr

Source: Extel Premium = pr Discount = ds



DOLLAR RATES

Australia	1.5961-1.5987
Canada	1.5291-1.5301
Denmark	6.8033-6.8073
Euro	0.9149-0.9156
Hong Kong	7.7495-7.7500
Japan	117.65-117.70
Malaysia	3.7999-3.8002
Norway	7.8160-7.8220
Singapore	1.7217-1.7227
Sweden	8.2040-8.2140
Switzerland	1.4630-1.4640

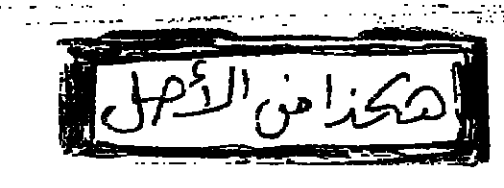
OTHER STERLING

Argentina peso*	1.6230-1.6250
Australia dollar	2.5938-2.5975
Bahrain dinar	0.6030-0.6170
Brazil real*	3.0050-3.0250
Cyprus pound	0.8555-0.8753
Euro	1.4881-1.4882
Finland markka	8.8086-8.9561
Greece drachma	474.75-485.71
Hong Kong dollar	12.5852-12.5938
India rupee	67.85-69.43
Indonesia rupiah	14028.0-14628.0
Kuwait dinar KD	0.4870-0.4984
Malaysia ringgit	6.1710-6.1753
New Zealand dollar	3.0746-3.0806
Pakistan rupee	78.55 Buy
Saudi Arabia riyal	5.8250-5.9608
Singapore dollar	2.7965-2.7999
S Africa rand (com)	9.9590-10.1904
U A E dirham	5.8775-6.0145

Barclays Treasury * Lloyds Bank

FTSE VOLUMES

3i	907	Land Secs	1,298
ASDA Gp	7,949	Legal & Gn	3,344
Abbey Ntl	2,769	Lloyds TSB	13,410
Allnce & Leic	3,002	LucasVarity	987
Allied Dom	7,599	Marks Spr	18,025
Allied Zrch	7,176	Nat Grid	9,535
Amvescap	981	Nat Power	8,073
AB Foods	657	NatWst Bk	6,507
Bk of Scot	3,360	Norwich Un	3,007
BAA	3,985	Orange	4,711
Barclays	3,455	P & O	1,862
Bass	2,295	Pearson	3,012
BG	6,495	PowerGen	1,328
Billiton	2,753	Prudential	7,818
BOC	870	Railtrack	2,653
Boots	3,978	Reckitt Col	1,387
BP Amoco	15,063	Reed Intl	5,995
BAe	9,398	Rentokil	12,369
BA	3,539	Reuters	4,214
Brt Am Tob	3,863	Rio Tinto	3,257
Brit Energy	8,169	Rolls Royce	2,654
BSkyB	2,627	Ryl & Sun	5,651
BT	15,041	Ryl Bk Sct	4,785
BTR Siebe	18,989	Safeway	10,962
CGU	3,420	Sainsbury	6,331
COLT Telecom	3,965	Schroders	251
Cable Wire	14,155	Scot & New	1,887
Cadbury	3,718	Scot Sthn Engy	4,241
Carlton Cms	1,168	Scot Power	4,804
Centrica	6,392	Securicor	2,122
Compass Gp	5,244	Sevrn Trent	1,514
Daily Mail A	308	Shell Trans	19,939
Diageo	10,433	Smiths Ind	1,329
Dixons Grp	1,633	SmKl Bch	15,072
EMI	1,962	Stagecoach	1,939
Gallaher	3,313	Std Chartd	3,155
Gen Elec	6,762	Sun Life	4,134
GKN	2,297	TeleWest	9,588
Glaxo Well	8,242	Tesco	13,611
Granada	1,518	Thames W	669
GUS	2,115	Tomkins	7,717
GRE	4,214	Unilever	7,695
Hanson	1,864	Utd News	1,267
ICI	3,511	Utd Utilities	1,259
Imperial Tob	2,137	Vodafone	6,619
HSBC	4,227	WPP	3,086
Halifax	10,779	Whitbread	1,921
Hays	2,105	Williams	10,275
Kingfisher	2,904	Woolwich	2,224
Ladbroke	7,982	Zeneca	4,920



Developers home in on shoppers

Paul Armstong analyses the plans for Bluewater

Developers of the £1.2 billion Bluewater project say that its location in Kent is justified by its ability to entice shoppers from far and wide. However, they have what amounts to a partial back-up plan should their forecasts of commuting customers prove a little ambitious.

The investors, led by the Australian property group Lend Lease, are in the throes of ensuring that at least 30,000 potential shoppers take up residence in the 10,000 houses they plan to build on the edge of their retailing colossus in Dartford.

Lend Lease insists that its extensive, although little-talked-about, residential plan is a stand-alone project and is in no way designed to support Bluewater's economics. The forecast number of shoppers at Bluewater, it says, does not include a "single soul" from its emerging city.

This means that the nearby residents could be seen as significant icing on the cake for a complex which, according to its owners, already boasts robust economics. In fact, it could not be seen any other way.

However, Lend Lease is eyeing a much bigger prize than a few extra customers at Bluewater. The developer believes that it will "generate a few million of profit each year and rising" by developing residential, office and light industrial complexes on the land surrounding its retail display.

Lend Lease also thinks that this will go on for 50 years, creating an impressive exponential equation for its accountants to contemplate back at home.

Like the land housing Bluewater, the area earmarked for Lend Lease's long-term project is owned by Blue Circle, the cement producer, which will be eternally grateful to the Australian developer for helping it to unlock the value of its once-dormant asset.

Blue Circle has agreed to a joint venture with Lend Lease that will enable development of the 2,000 acres it holds around the shopping complex. Blue Circle contributes the land and Lend Lease provides the expertise and working capital. The pair do not plan to introduce other investors, as has been done at Bluewater.

Stuart Hornery, chairman of Lend Lease, says that the idea emerged from the company's continuing "cities of the future" research, which identified areas east of London as strategically important European regions in coming years. "We thought it was obvious, but when we asked around it was perceived by London Inc as being very brownfield," Mr Hornery said.

However, he says that this view overlooked the fact that Ebbsfleet, which is part of the Blue Circle land, has the only railway station on the planned fast link to the Channel Tunnel. Its attractiveness could be enhanced further if the link was extended to St Pancras.

Blue Circle has eight million sq ft of land around the station that has been approved for residential and retail developments, although planning is in the early stages. In the meantime, the joint venture has started building the first of 500 houses, costing £200,000 each, at the Stone Castle site immediately adjacent to Bluewater. Campus-style office parks are also planned for this area.

A third site, Crossways, will consist mainly of offices and warehouses in an attempt to capitalise on the region's perceived strategic advantage as a distribution point.

In keeping with Lend Lease practice, the buildings will be sold soon after they are leased. It is also the company's policy not to disclose its financial returns from individual projects.

"We want to see if we can create a new environment where we mix office and residential more closely," Mr Hornery said. "We know that from the middle of 1995 to 2015, 4.4 million new houses are needed in Britain and basically there is no land.

"There are few locations like this. We have big demand working for us. There is no risk attached to it at all. There might be a bit of experimental housing but the bulk of it will be stuff you will see everywhere."

Why didn't someone think of it before?

Britain's defiant truckers haul up their flag of convenience

UK hauliers are ready to flee fuel and road tax costs by moving overseas, writes **Adam Jones**

Britain's truckers are contemplating life overseas. The high cost of diesel and road tax has long left them vulnerable to cheaper foreign competition and further increases announced in Gordon Brown's Budget last week have sparked a rebellion.

Backed by their trade associations — and with a sympathetic campaign in *The Sun* newspaper — trucking firms are threatening to set up businesses in other European Union countries and then "commute" back into Britain, continuing to serve their customers but denying the UK Treasury any tax benefit to offset the damage they cause to our roads and air.

The process is called "flagging out", a term more commonly applied to ships. But just how bad is the plight of the UK trucker and how serious is the threat to go overseas?

There is no doubt that fuel and road tax is much more expensive in the UK than elsewhere in the European Union. A litre of diesel costs about 71.2p in the UK. In France, it would be a about 45p. In Spain, 41p.

It is imperative that UK hauliers taking loads to France leave with a minimum of fuel so they can fill up on the other side of the Channel — and they must also fill up before returning in the hope of making a reasonable profit.

The most commonly quoted comparison for vehicle excise duty — or "tonnage tax" — is for a 40-tonne lorry with five axles, which the industry says is Europe's standard big truck.

The Budget increased the tax on this vehicle from £3,210 to £5,750 in the UK. This compares with £291 in Portugal, £338 in Luxembourg, £459 in France and £1,751 in Germany, according to the Freight Transport Association, a trade body that represents truckers.

The increases in the Budget were no surprise, however. The Labour Government had pledged to increase road fuel tax rates by an annual average of 6 per cent above the rate of inflation. This continued an "escalator" arrangement introduced by the Conservatives in 1993 at the slightly lower level of 5 per cent.

Steven Norris was the transport minister then. Bizarrely, Mr Norris, now out of office, is campaigning against the rolling fuel tax rises as head of the Road Haulage Association, another trade body.

He denies that his members are suffering at the hands of a "Frankenstein's monster" that he helped create. He claims that the Labour Government has abused the system by increasing the annual multiplier. More convincingly, he argues that the tax simply is not working and that vehicles are not being priced off the roads.

The Government did warn last November that it was going to target 40-tonne, five-axle lorries. As a concession, it said 41-tonne lorries with six axles — which spread a load more evenly and therefore less destructively — would be taxed much more lightly. This has been greeted with disdain by the haulage firms, who say 41-tonne trucks are not allowed on roads in continental Europe.

In the meantime, foreign haulage firms are increasing their presence in Britain, by about 100,000 trucks a year — a growth rate of some 14 per cent. Big players include Norbert Dentressangle of France and Willi Betz of Germany. When they arrive at Dover with tanks full of cheap petrol, they can drive up to 1,500 miles. As of last July, they have freedom to tout for business in the UK.

The increased competition is undoubtedly hurting domestic firms. Pre-tax profit margins at Eddie Stobart, a privately-owned haulier based in Carlisle, were pretty thin at less than five per cent in 1997.

In 1998, with foreign competition mounting, the situation worsened. Profits fell from £3.6 million before tax to about £1.8 million, even though turnover rose from £77 million to more than £100 million — a profit margin of less than 2 per cent.

Mr Stobart said the latest tax rises will add £4 million to the company's costs. He added: "The transport side of our business has been getting worse and worse. It's all about survival."

He is threatening to register half of his 800-strong fleet overseas, possibly in Luxembourg. The drivers would continue to live in the UK and their trucks would also stay here most of the time, returning to their nominal headquarters six times a year to satisfy residence regulations.

This is untested ground, though. Donald Armour, the resident flagging out expert at the Freight Transport Association, reckons the Government could move to stop this kind of arrangement.

While there has been a wave of interest since the Budget, he thinks flagging out will only really be an option for the largest, who have the scale to deal with the extra legal, accounting, insurance and regulatory red tape overseas.

Those firms who do flag out may be tempted to hire foreign workers to replace UK-based staff. This happens in UK shipping, where owners register vessels in dependencies such as the Isle of Man so they can reduce crewing costs by not paying national insurance. About two-thirds of the bigger UK cargo and passenger ships are operated from offshore locations. In 1980, they would all have been based on the mainland.

But haulage firms have to face the fact that other workers within the European Union — who have the same rights to drive over here as British nationals — are likely to be more costly to employ and more likely to be unionised. There are further restrictions on using cheap labour from Eastern Europe.

There will be a stand-off while the industry continues to demand rebates on diesel duty. Then, who knows. The trade bodies say truckers are agitating for more direct action, such as port blockades. If it works for the French, might it not work for them?



Hard shoulder: in the face of growing foreign competition, Eddie Stobart is threatening to register half of his 800-strong haulage fleet in Luxembourg

SPOTTING EDDIE STOBART LORRIES IS ALL THE ROAD RAGE

FEW trends in modern business can be more baffling than the mythology that has sprung up around Eddie Stobart, the Carlisle haulage firm that was started in the 1970s (Adam Jones writes).

The company's trucks, which each bear a woman's name, have become motorway celebrities, reportedly after Jools Holland, the musician, said that he liked looking out for the lorries to relieve the boredom of being out on the road touring. The company, owned by Eddie Stobart Jr and his brother William, was overwhelmed with inquiries from other closet truck spotters. A fan club was duly formed and there are now a reputed 20,000 spotters.

One variation on the spotting game is called "Nobbies and Stobbies", where one team looks out for Eddie Stobart lorries and another looks out for those of his French arch-enemy, Norbert Dentressangle. Eddie Stobart produces collectable toys and replica driver uniforms. There are several unofficial Internet sites, full of pictures of Stobart lorries, with names such as *lorryspotting.com*.

They swirl with gossip about the company, such as whether it intended to introduce "an American-style Scania tractor unit" (this speculation was found to be true).

The firm was even immortalised in a song by the Wurzels, best known for *Combine Harvester*. It had the following last verse:

"I want to be an Eddie Stobart driver,
That's exactly what I want to be.
And if I can't be an Eddie Stobart driver
I'm going home to burn my HGV."

New hat: former transport minister Steven Norris is now campaigning against fuel tax rises

Broker who loved life

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

OLDER City hands will be shocked to learn of the death of Alan Harman, aged 55, once a well-known stockbroker who left the Square Mile in 1974 when Chapman & Rowe, his firm, was hammered on the Stock Exchange after failing to meet its obligations.

Harman finally settled in Spain, where he dealt in commodities. He killed himself last week in Puerto Banus, apparently unsettled by financial worries.

"He just loved life — I really don't understand," said one who knew him in the City.

Before the secondary banking crisis saw for Chapman & Rowe, Harman had a successful career trading with institutions, and the manner of its ending meant he left behind him in the City a few enemies, I am told. "I think there's a lot of jealousy involved," says his former colleague.

A COLLEAGUE dropped in on the European Commission office in London yesterday. Unearthly peace and calm, he reported, and the face of Jacques Santer still beaming down on the scene. (Shouldn't they have turned it to the wall? Oh well).

He asked about this strange calm as the Commission entered the most turbulent few weeks of its history. "But we're thinking a lot," a senior official said enigmatically.

Polls apart

THE Commission was the venue for the launch of a pamphlet, entitled *The Unforeseeable Consequences of Mr Gordon Brown*, which urges on the UK an immediate referendum on the single currency.

It is by Andrew Duff, director of the Federal Trust, a think-tank, and a prospective Lib-Dem MEP. He is encouraged by overnight events at the Commission, which he says are a triumph for European democracy.

OK, so we call a referendum now. What are the chances of a vote to join? Zero, Duff cheerfully admits. I see. You want a referendum which you are going to lose. Except that you know you aren't going to get one anyway. No, on second thoughts I don't see.



"Is it just me, or are policemen looking more expensive these days?"

Eastward ho

IN 1959 a young Welsh accountant, unable to make headway in class-ridden Britain, headed off for Canada and opportunity. Yesterday Colin Parsons, chairman of Taylor Woodrow, took his final bow in the City.

Parsons came back from Canada seven years ago to sort out the mess at head office. Any differences he might have had with the old country are now forgotten.

Despite having a grown-up family in Canada, Parsons and his wife, Alice, have opted to stay in this country after retirement. "We like the people and the lifestyle, and the winters are much better than Canada," he says.

FRUSTRATED by the lack of interest in smaller companies, Brian Winterflood of Winterflood Securities decided to test the waters at last week's PLC Awards. There were, ostensibly, 1,500 people at the awards dinner with an interest in the subject, so he inserted an advert in the programme.

"Now, does anyone read this, I wonder," it said. "Let's find out." And readers were encouraged to provide their views on how the market in smaller companies could be revived.

"They paid a lot of money to go to the awards," says Winterflood. "But I haven't had one reply."

Blown away

A CHALLENGE to Amazon.com, the online bookshop with the ballooning share price that has yet to make a profit. The 1999 Hot-Air Challenge is organised by Global Investor Bookshop, which markets financial books on the Internet. Entrants are invited to forecast the Amazon share price at the end of next month. First price is a balloon flight with champagne breakfast.

Runners-up will receive copies of *Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds* by Charles Mackay, the definitive work on money manias from tulips and the South Sea Bubble onwards.

MARTIN WALLER

city.diary@the-times.co.uk

BUSINESS LETTERS

Terminal 5 decision vital

From the President and members of the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Sir, It is with relief that business can finally welcome the end of the Terminal 5 public inquiry — the UK's longest ever. While it is, of course, right that each side must have its views fully aired, we cannot afford to delay a decision for much longer. We therefore urge the inspector to do all that he can to deliver his report swiftly.

The Terminal 5 decision ultimately affects Britain's global competitiveness and the benefits of a positive decision would be felt by businesses throughout the whole of the UK. Regional airports rely heavily on their links to Heathrow, which, as Europe's premier airport, can offer the huge range and frequency of flights and destinations that are so important to business. Furthermore, Heathrow generates £3 billion a year in wages, supports 200,000 jobs across the country and is worth nearly £5 billion each year to UK tourist revenues alone.

Other airports, such as Amsterdam Schiphol and Paris Charles de Gaulle, are being actively developed with the specific objective of taking business from Heathrow. If Britain is not to lose out to European competitors, a decision to build Terminal 5 must be made soon.

Yours faithfully,
COLIN PARSONS, President, London Chamber of Commerce and Industry,
ADAIR TURNER, Director General, CBI,
BILL MORRIS, Secretary General, TGWU,
PETER GEORGE, Chairman, Hilton International,
JOSEPH P. MACHALE, Chief Executive, JP Morgan Securities,
GERALD CORBETT, Chief Executive, Railtrack,
JIM BUCKLEY, Chief Executive, The Baltic Exchange,
33 Queen Street,
London, EC4R 1AP.

From Mr Dermot Cox and Mr Nic Ferriday

Sir, On Wednesday the Terminal 5 public inquiry comes to an end after nearly four years. The length of the inquiry is partly a reflection of the determination of ordinary people across London and the Thames Valley and their democratic representatives to ensure that the proposed massive expansion of Heathrow shall be rejected.

We are very optimistic that the inspector will reach this conclusion when he finishes his report in two years' time. However, there is considerable anxiety among local people that the Government may succumb to lobbying pressure from the air transport industry to overturn an inspector's recommendation to refuse permission for Terminal 5.

We are calling on John Prescott, Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, to make a commitment now that the Government will implement the recommendations of the inquiry.

While Mr Prescott has formal discretion over the ultimate decision, he cannot understand the issues in the same depth as the inspector and will, therefore, be in no position to disregard the final judgement.

Yours faithfully,
DERMOT COX,
Chairman,
Heathrow Association for the Control of Aircraft Noise,
PO Box 339,
Richmond, Surrey,
TW9 3RB.

NIC FERRIDAY,
Spokesman,
Friends of the Earth.



Overseas success to fuel Wolseley acquisition spree

By Matthew Barbour

WOLSELEY, the builder's merchant, is to continue its acquisition spree during the second half of the year after a buoyant US market raised first-half profits above market forecasts.

The company said that it expects the US market to remain strong, with British and French markets likely to improve. By contrast, markets were likely to remain difficult for the manufacturing division. However, the company said that overall it expects a "satisfactory" outcome for the full year.

Pre-tax profits for the six months to January 31, 1999, rose 14.2 per cent to £142.5 million (£124.8 million), 5 per cent above top-end City forecasts of £136 million.

Steve Webster, the finance director, said the results were a result of strong sales and profits in the US, which accounts for more than half of sales, as well as a strong European performance.

"The US remains very positive. It is a strong market and there are no signs of it softening — all the recent indications on housing starts and building permits are extremely encouraging," he said.

Shares in Wolseley, which last week jumped 78p on the back of data reinforcing strong housing growth in the US and encouraging results from rival building merchant Travis Perkins, rose a further 7¾p yesterday to 478¼p. In September the shares hit a low of 276p following a steady decline from 556p before it disappointed the markets with last year's first-half results.

So far this year Wolseley has spent a record £211 million on acquisitions, including Hall & Co in Britain, Porcher Distribution in France and four US distribution businesses for about $68 million (£42.5 million). Mr Webster said that the company is aiming to maintain its spending rate "ad infinitum", provided it is presented with sufficient opportunities.

"We have plenty of balance-sheet capacity to take more debt," he said. Over the past 12 months net borrowing has jumped to £219.4 million from £38.1 million, with gearing rising to 21.3 per cent (4 per cent).

Sales during the first half rose 12 per cent to £2.6 billion (£2.3 billion). Earnings per share were 15.06p (15.12p), with an interim dividend of 3.75p (3.5p).

Weekend Money website: http://www.times-money.co.uk

Homes key for Taylor Woodrow

By Robert Lea

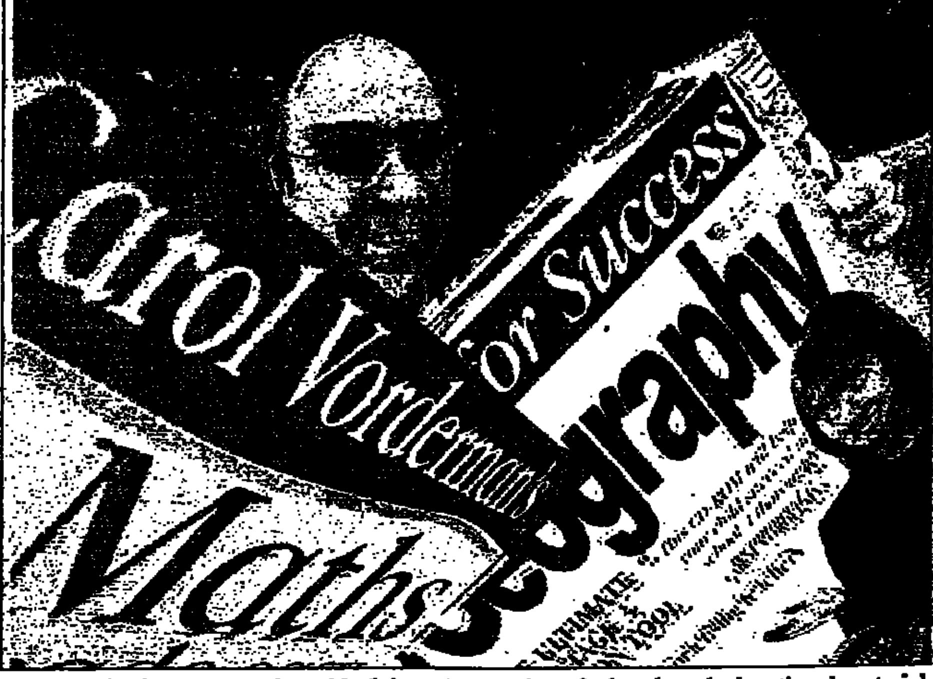
THE new chief executive of Taylor Woodrow emphasised the group's conversion into a focused Anglo-US housebuilder when he indicated yesterday that large international construction projects are becoming too risky.

Keith Egerton said: "We are clearly an international housing and property group supported by construction and trading businesses. We are more comfortable with the risk in housing and property."

Mr Egerton said that turnover from the construction arm, which now accounts for just 6 per cent of profits, will decline. The new focus could also see the sale of its merchanting business, Greenham Trading, possibly for as much as £100 million.

The group yesterday revealed pre-tax profits for 1998 leaping 22 per cent to £100.3 million on the back of a 73 per cent profit rise from its booming housing operations in the US to £26 million. In the UK, Taywood Homes last year lifted operating margins to 10 per cent from 8.1 per cent. The company is paying a final dividend of 3.6p, making 5.1p for the year, up 13 per cent.

ROBIN MAYES



Peter Kindersley says now is an ideal time to expand curriculum-based educational material

Education division for DK

DORLING KINDERSLEY, the multimedia publisher, is to launch a new education division and turn its website into a virtual bookshop (Raymond Snoddy writes).

Peter Kindersley, the executive chairman, unveiled the initiatives yesterday as the company announced a 16.3 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £4.7 million on turnover down 4.2 per cent to £87.4 million in the six months to December 31. The interim dividend is unchanged at 1.5p.

Parents' fears about "a failed education system" provided the ideal environment for DK to expand curriculum-based educational material, Mr Kindersley said. The new division will bring together both electronic and paper-based publishing and develop the concept of computer tutors.

DK is also about to relaunch its website to sell direct to customers via the Internet. The site will provide the electronic equivalent of taking a book off the shelf to browse the contents, and "virtual assistants" will know about a customer's previous purchases to make buying suggestions.

Doulton investors to decide

By Sarah Cunningham

SHAREHOLDERS and directors of Royal Doulton, the troubled china group, are to decide whether a new chief executive is to be appointed following the withdrawal from the job of Patrick Wenger, who was involved in a serious accident at the end of last year.

The company is currently being run by Hamish Grossart, the company doctor who was brought in as chairman and asked to turn the business round. He oversaw the decision last year to make more than 1,200 staff redundant.

He revealed yesterday that the group's restructuring had left it with a pre-tax loss of £42.6 million for calander 1998, from a profit of £6.2 million a year earlier. The loss per share was 78.97p (6.92p earnings). There is no final dividend.

Mr Grossart said he will consult shareholders and directors over the next few weeks and, if asked, would run the company for the next 12 to 18 months.



Morgan Crucible in disposal to US

MORGAN CRUCIBLE, the diversified industrial company, expects to raise £136.8 million from the sale of its maintenance, repair and overhaul business to America's Illinois Tool Works, announced yesterday. The company also said it would seek authority to buy back up to 14.99 per cent of its shares.

Morgan Crucible shares rose 12½p to 259p, helped by the company's statement that its 1998 profits would be towards the higher end of the range indicated in January's profits warning. Shareholders were told that profits before tax and exceptional items would be between 15 per cent and 20 per cent below those of the previous year. However, the company cautioned that proceeds from the sale of assets would not be sufficient to cover goodwill previously written off, and that the results would show an exceptional charge of £57 million as a result.

Britax ahead 15%

BRITAX INTERNATIONAL, the automotive engineering and aircraft interiors company, lifted underlying pre-tax profits 15.2 per cent to £52.3 million in 1998. Adjusted earnings per share rose 15.3 per cent to 10.25p. Britax also raised £48.4 million after tax from the disposal of its two leasing businesses. The total dividend rises 7.5 per cent to 4.19p, with a second interim dividend of 3.278p. Britax said it had identified a number of targeted bolt-on acquisitions that could be funded through strong cash generation.

Brammer blow

PROFITS at Brammer, the industrial services group, fell to £23.9 million before tax from £30.5 million in 1998. This reflected a disappointing performance in the UK, where business was adversely affected by the impact of the strong pound on exporting and manufacturing companies that make use of Brammer's services. Earnings per share fell to 35.2p from 45.8p. However, the total dividend rises to 17.8p from 17.2p, with a final 11.8p. Brammer said the outlook was still uncertain for UK businesses although there were signs that the rate of decline may be easing.

Headlam's Eclipse bid

HEADLAM GROUP, the floorcoverings and fabrics distributor, has launched a recommended £52.4 million takeover bid for Eclipse Blinds. The offer, which has received acceptances in respect of 29 per cent of Eclipse, is of 20 new Headlam shares for 61 Eclipse shares, valuing each Eclipse share at 113.6p, against Monday's closing price of 97½p. Headlam also reported a rise in 1998 pre-tax profits to £22.9 million from £18.1 million. Eclipse reported annual pre-tax profits little changed at £6.52 million, compared with £6.3 million in 1997.

Slow start for Finlay

JAMES FINLAY, the plantations and speciality teas company, said it had made a disappointing start to 1999, with relatively weak tea prices. However, dry weather in Kenya, North India and Bangladesh suggested that prices would improve this year as a result of a reduction in crops. The company was reporting a rise in 1998 pre-tax profits to £16.2 million from £13.9 million, with a rise in earnings per share to 10.8p from 10.2p. The total dividend is increased to 5p from 4.15p, with a second interim dividend of 3p.

Cortecs £1m charge

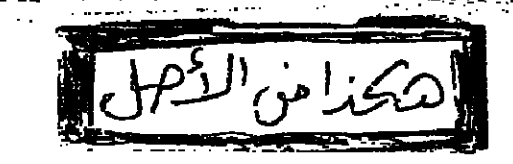
CORTECS, the troubled biotechnology company whose chairman is Lord Patten, will take a second-half charge of £1 million to cover the cost of streamlining its activities after the disclosure last December that two of its three lead drugs programmes had failed to make adequate progress. Yesterday the company reported an increase in first-half losses to £11.5 million from £9.1 million. The loss per share was 7.2p, compared with a 5.9p loss last time. The shares, which peaked at 418p in 1996, traded at 24p yesterday.

Prestbury in the black

PRESTBURY GROUP, the property investment company where Nick Leslau is chairman and chief executive, returned to profit in 1998, earning £3.7 million before tax compared with a loss of £800,000 in 1997. Earnings were 0.08p a share, against a 0.3p loss in the previous year. There is again no dividend but the company has promised a "modest" dividend for 1999. Net asset value was 2.75p a share at the year end, up from 1.38p at the end of 1997. Yesterday the shares, which trade on the Alternative Investment Market, were unchanged at 3¾p.

Secure Trust up 7%

SECURE TRUST, the private banking group, lifted pretax profits 7 per cent to £11.4 million in 1998, with a 5 per cent rise in earnings to 52.3p a share. The total dividend rises 57 per cent to 36p a share, with a 10p special dividend paid in November, and a final dividend of 18p. The shares rose 17½p to 580p yesterday. The company's two divisions comprise Arbuthnot Latham, the private and merchant bank, and Secure Trust Bank, a provider of household cash management services.



THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
ACM INVESTMENTS LTD				
0171 470 0100				
Short Dtd Gilt	138.50	140.50	+ 0.10	
US Govt Bd (US$)	0.8465	0.8564	+ 0.04	
Gilt Income	55.07	55.92	− 0.54	5.40
Gilt Growth	100.50	102.20	+ 0.20	
Sterling Bond	56.05	57.05†	+ 0.07	5.50
AIB GOVETT UNIT TRUST LTD				
0171 378 7979 Dealing: 0171 407 7888				
Protected Funds				
UK Safeguard	147.34	157.92	− 0.01	
-do- NAV to Jun 19	140.39	140.39		
UK Equity Safeguard	118.35	126.58	+ 1.52	2.02
-do- NAV to Mar 19	110.98	110.98	...	...
US Eqy Safeguard	97.72	103.76	− 0.06	...
Cash	954.54	959.31	...	6.25
UK Growth Funds				
UK Equity Gen	445.48	473.92	+ 1.63	1.80
UK Small Cos	96.03	102.70	+ 0.42	0.52
FTSE 250 Index	112.04	119.82	− 0.35	1.89
Geared UK Index	#25.473	#26.680	− 0.02	5.75
Income Funds				
Corp Bd	87.85	90.90	+ 0.04	6.65
Monthly Inc	43.93	46.99†		7.98
International Funds				
American Gen	397.11	418.85	+ 3.41	0.17
American Sml	175.42	188.23	+ 1.84	
JG US Index	#30.748	#32.395	+ 0.35	4.50
European Gen	447.02	472.86	+ 9.86	
European Sml	210.37	224.99	+ 1.13	
Japan Gen	117.80	124.06	+ 2.11	...
Asia Pacific	65.73	70.01	+ 0.33	1.09
Pacific Smll	92.93	98.74	+ 0.98	...
Greater China	152.76	163.37	+ 1.84	...
Latin America	64.99	69.29	+ 3.14	...

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Monthly Inc #	98.50	103.84†	− 0.04	7.03
Telecoms	96.18	102.22	+ 0.94	
JUPITER UT MGRS LTD				
0171 581 3020				
Income #	336.10	357.54	..	3.11
UK Growth	125.65	133.66	.	1.76
Ecology	127.32	135.43	.	0.32
European	311.86	330.67	.	0.19
Far Eastern	330.40	351.48		
UK Special Sits	76.67	81.77	...	0.24
Fd of Inv Tsts	62.56	66.72	..	
High Income #	71.41	76.16		3.94
Financial Opps	82.30	87.78		0.69
Growth & Income #	57.14	60.93	.	2.13
Global Opps	57.80	61.60†		0.71

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
-do- Accum	331.80	350.90†	+ 1.50	1.23
UK Equity #	85.00	89.90	+ 0.30	3.10
-do- Accum #	251.10	265.70	+ 0.80	3.10
UK Growth	1668.00	1763.90	+ 5.10	1.38
-do- Accum	1912.40	2022.30	+ 5.80	1.38
MGM UNIT MANAGERS LTD				
Dealing: 01277 281 010 Enq: 01903 204 631				
European Growth	165.97	176.56	+ 0.22	0.19
Intl Bond	64.37	67.63	+ 0.04	2.82
Intl Equity Growth	120.73	128.88	+ 0.60	0.29
N Amer Growth	225.92	239.57†	+ 2.13	0.22
Special Sits Growth	42.15	44.88†	+ 0.05	1.12
UK Growth	689.73	733.75	+ 1.45	1.49
-do- Accum	991.94	1055.25	+ 2.87	1.49

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
LAURENCE KEEN UNIT TRUST MGMT				
0171 555 8000				
Bridge Income #	419.48	446.26	− 0.92	4.45
Esk Growth	149.87	159.44	− 1.42	0.50
Inc & Growth #	107.71	114.59	− 0.47	2.84
Smaller Cos	125.90	133.94	+ 0.05	1.46
Ewe Spec Sit Inc	59.63	63.44	+ 0.04	2.30
Ewe Spec Sit Acc	64.31	68.41	+ 0.04	2.30
Pennine Growth	60.71	64.59	− 0.05	1.37
LAZARD UNIT TST MGRS LTD				
Dealing: 0870 6068408				
UK Cap	632.60	672.20†	− 0.50	1.26
UK Inc/Gth #	668.30	709.60†	+ 2.38	3.04
UK Income #	458.00	485.80†	+ 1.50	4.04
UK Income Acc #	478.60	506.10†	+ 1.70	4.04
UK Sm Cos	348.50	372.70†	+ 0.54	1.90
Euro Gwth	255.80	270.40†	+ 1.30	0.25

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
NM JOINT INVESTORS LTD				
01920 823967				
Balanced Fd #	1582.40	1606.00†		2.80
Income #	1318.60	1339.20†		3.80
MALDON UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD				
0131 222 4242				
Maldon General	219.30	224.30	.	2.79
MAREK INVESTMENT MGMT LTD				
0171 815 7070				
Growth Fd Acc	102.10	108.90	+ 0.40	0.84
MARKS & SPENCER UNIT TRUST LTD				

Equities shed early gains

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

BANKS

BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

BUILDING MATERIALS

CHEMICALS

CONSTRUCTION

DISTRIBUTORS

DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

ELECTRICITY

ELECTRONIC & ELECT

ENGINEERING

ENGINEERING, VEHICLES

FOOD MANUFACTURERS

HEALTHCARE

HOUSEHOLD GDS & TEXT

INSURANCE

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

LEISURE & HOTELS

MEDIA

MINING

OIL & GAS

OTHER FINANCIAL

PHARMACEUTICALS

PRINTING & PAPER

PROPERTY

RETAILERS, FOOD

RETAILERS, GENERAL

SUPPORT SERVICES

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

TRANSPORT

WATER

ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET

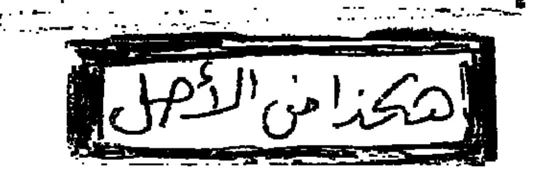
SHORTS (under 5 years)

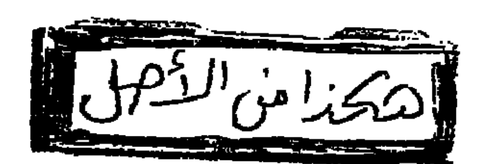
MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)

LONGS (over 15 years)

UNDATED

INDEX-LINKED





From Beijing to Tokyo and Dublin to New York, St Patrick's Day celebrations circle the world, says Eve-Ann Prentice

The green party wins worldwide

Eddie Jordan, the Irish stalwart and Formula One chieftain, will be living proof today of the Guinness adage that not everything in black and white makes sense.

While his compatriots do their strenuous best to celebrate St Patrick's Day in the time-honoured fashion, downing more than a million pints of the black stuff by closing time in the UK alone, Jordan will be putting his foot down hard — on a bicycle pedal. For some, the image may conjure Guinness's advert portraying a fish on a bicycle.

The motor racing supremo will push himself to the limit at the start of a 250-mile sponsored cycle ride from Petra in Jordan to Eilat in Israel to raise funds for a children's cancer charity.

Just over a week after seeing his driver, Heinz-Harald Frentzen, sprayed with champagne for coming second in the opening Grand Prix of the season in Australia, Jordan is spending St Patrick's Day as possibly the driest Irishman on the planet.

But even if Jordan does not manage a pint of Guinness today, revellers in Britain and around the world will be raising a glass to honour Ireland's patron saint (who never tasted a drop in his lifetime). A cool 45 pints of the stuff will be served every second that the UK's 72,000 bars are open today and one in six of the bars will hold a St Patrick's Day party.

In Ireland and America St Patrick's Day revellers have been getting in the party mood since the weekend. On Saturday the Chicago River began turning even greener than usual as city workers dumped vegetable dye from the stern of a power boat, while Ireland began ushering in the year 2000 with a dazzling fireworks display watched by more than 100,000 people.

One of the largest crowds yet seen on the streets of Dublin gathered on the banks of the Liffey for the glittering street party, kicking off St Patrick's Day celebrations and nine months of festivities leading to the millennium. It is the first official event in the world to herald the year 2000.

Jim McDaid, Ireland's Minister for Tourism, Sport and Recreation, says: "Tonight is the night that we show the world that the Irish know how to celebrate."

The national airline Aer Lingus spent £400,000 sponsoring the show, touted as the biggest pyrotechnics display yet staged in Europe.

It was orchestrated by Syd Howard, a 63-year-old Australian and the man behind the fireworks displays which accompanied the handover of Hong Kong and the end of the Atlanta Olympics. About 6.5 tonnes of explosives — 15,000 shells — were shipped in for the show and stored in an Irish Army base for two weeks beforehand. The spectacle around the majestic Customs House brought the curtain up on five days of revelry across Ireland leading up to the biggest St Patrick's Day celebrations on the island to date.

More bizarre Irish *craics* will take place in Beijing, where the first St Patrick's Day street party is being held, and in Tokyo, which is hosting a parade to rival the mega-festivities in New York and Australia. One place where drinkers are sure to be high is Nepal, where the *Mount Everest Brewery has* been licensed to brew Guinness and distribute it to Kathmandu's 130 bars for sale at a heart-warming 55p a bottle.

> The Mount Everest Brewery has been licensed to brew Guinness in Nepal — it will be a high point of the day

And the man behind all these revelries? It is hard to separate historical fact from legend in the minds and hearts of the Irish, but one thing is certain — St Patrick did not come from Ireland. He was born to a Romano-British town councillor, probably in Wales or what is now western England, in about 390.

At 16, he was captured by Irish pirates and enslaved by them for six years. After escaping or being freed, he was ordained a bishop and returned to Ireland as a missionary. Intent on eradicating paganism, idolatry and sun-worship (hard though the latter may be to imagine in an island renowned for rain), St Patrick built permanent foundations for the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland.

The Patrick of legend, meanwhile, was a mystical wizard-like being who drove all the serpents out of Ireland and who managed to explain the mysteries of the Holy Trinity with the three-leafed shamrock.

Eddie Jordan's venture in the saddle *comes after he swapped life in* the fast lane for a ride on the wagon — he has given up alcohol for Lent following a challenge from his daughter, Miki, 15. Nonetheless, with Irish eyes shining with enthusiasm for St Patrick's Day, he says: "Anyone who has the stupidity to go off drink for Lent knows that you are allowed to get lashed on St Pat's Day."

There is certainly one St Patrick's Day which he will never forget. In 1991 his team was to race in its first Formula One event in Phoenix, Arizona, on March 17. Shortly beforehand, when the expensive and high-powered world of motor racing had spent a fortune arranging to be there, "the city's mayor announced that the big race would have to be held a week early because the roads were being painted green for St Patrick's Day".

Politicians are rarely confused with saints, but the strain of keeping the Irish peace process on course needs the patience of one. Tonight, Bertie Ahern, the Taoiseach, will find a little light relief from the cares of office when he presents Bill Clinton with a basket of shamrock after holding talks in Washington with the other Irish leaders and the American President.

In New York, meanwhile, there was one discordant note in the world's St Patrick's Day festivities when six protesters were arrested during the first Bronx St Patrick's Day Parade in 70 years, for trying to join the procession under the banner of a gay rights group. Police said the protesters displayed a banner that read "Lavender and Green Alliance," and rushed on to the street to join the parade a few minutes after it started.

BARBARA MATHERIAP



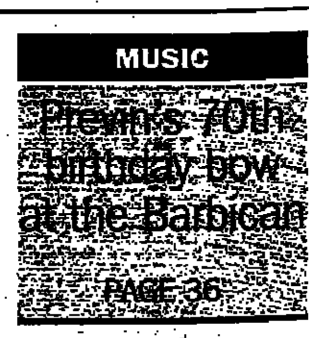
A Little Mr Leprechaun contestant at a St Patrick's Day festival



GALLERIES
It's a nuclear missile site, but is it art?
PAGE 35

THE TIMES
ARTS

MUSIC





What does it take to get children into the theatre? **Daniel Rosenthal** on gloomy new research

Give us Ross and Roald

When it is published tomorrow, new research into what 10 to 14-year-olds think about live drama will be eagerly scrutinised by all those theatre managers and artistic directors who talk of the pressing need to build "the audience of tomorrow". They are in for a sobering read.

Asked to name a leisure activity they pursue at weekends or during school holidays, every child in the survey mentioned cinema, but fewer than one in a hundred mentioned theatre. The survey, by the market research company Kids Connection, found that most children find theatres "stuffy and unfriendly", and resent having to sit in "uncomfortable seats far from the stage". They believe tickets are overpriced, and should cost the same as a seat at their local Odeon. The refreshment on offer is another turn-off, and one that managers should not underestimate; in an earlier survey for UCI Cinemas, Kids Connection discovered that more than a third of under-16s went to the movies for popcorn, ice-cream and soft drinks first, and the film second.

At least these perceived deficiencies are essentially cosmetic and, particularly where food and seat prices are concerned, treatable. For example, Sheffield Theatres' current "How Much?" initiative (underwritten by the Arts Council's New Audiences scheme) has been offering tickets to 16-24s for £3.50, prompting 12,000 young people to visit the Lyceum, Crucible and Studio theatres in the last quarter of 1998.

More disheartening — because they are much harder to counter — are the children's overwhelmingly negative opinions of what they have seen on stage, and of the fundamental nature of theatre as an art form. With their experience confined almost exclusively to pantomimes and touring West End musicals, the majority of children feel disappointed on three counts: there is a dearth of age-appropriate material, no peer-group kudos in attending, and they simply do not believe the on-stage action. Shows were either "babyish" or "too serious", with nothing to say about the way these children live their lives.

"These children feel that television gives them real life, and cinema gives them fantasy, but they find it very difficult to suspend disbelief in the theatre," says Pevryll Murray, the managing director of Kids Connection. "A lot of them find scene changes obtrusive, and they couldn't get their minds around the fact that characters can't actually go outside on stage." Only a handful of those questioned had ever been carried away by the immediacy of live drama.

Had the researchers gone to regions with minimal local theatre provision, and chosen children from families unable to afford even an occasional visit, their findings might seem unrepresentative. Yet Kids Connection interviewed 164 children from middle and working-class families at two state schools with what Murray calls "theatregoing reputations", one in Birmingham and one in Norwich — both cities which offer a good range of drama. "I really did think we'd get more positive responses," says Murray.

She will present the survey in London tomorrow at "Older Younger", a one-day seminar on the future of theatre for young people and the family. The research was funded by the Arts Council and Sainsbury's, and Lord Sainsbury of Preston Candover will use the seminar to launch an initiative for the commissioning and professional production of new work for young people.

Discussion panels at the event will feature directors with impressive track records in the youth market, including John Retallack, whose exhilarating stage adaptation of *Junk*, Melvin Burgess's controversial novel about teenage heroin addicts, won last year's Barclays Theatre Award for best young people's show and is currently on its second tour.

The survey, suggests Retallack, is a wake-up call for the industry. "At the moment, it's as though children this age are a huge 'disabled' group who from time to time we have to acknowledge," he says. "They lack money, so if you cater just for them you will struggle economically. They lack years, so you cannot choose to put on the kind of adult work that most directors want to stage.

"Theatre companies who work exclusively for young people make the best of their resources, but this research tells me that the real initiative has to come from the big national and regional venues. They have to take a much longer-term approach."

So what putative productions might persuade children to spend their pocket money on theatre rather than movies or video games? The survey found that what this crowd really, really wants is soap stars and adaptations of books by authors like Terry Pratchett, Judy Blume, Robert Swindells and Roald Dahl. Based on the survey, any producer in search of the ultimate teen hit should opt for *EastEnders'* Ross Kemp in anything by Dahl or, better still, *South Park — The Stage Show*. "A new play, by an author they didn't know, would have to be phenomenally good for them to be interested," says Murray.

Retallack disagrees. "I know of at least five really terrific, unproduced new plays for this age group circulating at the moment, but 90 per cent of theatres won't touch them because they don't fit into a recognised category. If they were aggressively marketed they could succeed. Young people think they know what they want — but you can surprise them."

● Junk *is on tour in England and Scotland until June 12 (for details call 01865 884240)*

SHEILA BURNETT



A scene from *Junk*, adapted by John Retallack, who dubs the new survey a "wake-up call"

GREAT BRITISH HOPES

Rising stars in the arts firmament

CHARLOTTE BROOM



Profession: Principal dancer with Northern Ballet Theatre.

Age: 27.

What is her style? The company's artistic director, Christopher Gable, considered her to have a remarkable ability to identify with roles. "I particularly enjoy dramatic parts as opposed to just technical ones," she says. "I feel I can get much deeper in a performance with a character." This makes her especially suited to NBT's theatrical style.

What's new? From tonight she can be seen at Sadler's Wells as Lucy in the Christopher Gable-Michael Pink *Dracula*. And she takes the title role in NBT's new modern-dress *Carmen*, premiered in Leeds last month and now in the touring repertoire.

How did she prepare for Carmen? She read Prosper Mérimée's novella and has seen several productions of the opera. "But ultimately it was up to me to find my own characterisation of Carmen, not copy someone else's." So who is her Carmen? "She is someone who doesn't think of the consequence of her actions. She just thinks of the moment."

How does she cope with all that tiring touring? It feels like a doddle after her first job. "I joined a small company called Wiener Ballet Theatre and spent six months doing *Swan Lake* in a different European city every night. So when I got to NBT I thought, this is luxury, spending a whole week in each place."

NADINE MEISNER

● *Daniel Hope's record label (Great British Hopes, last week) is Nimbus, not Chandos*

Epitaph for a wicked world

Troilus and Cressida
Olivier

Trevor Nunn's production of *Troilus* displays his usual respect for Shakespeare's text, up to but excluding the ending. After the Greeks in their plumed helmets have battled with the Trojans in their oriental robes, he gives us a last, spurious glimpse of Cressida. She stands alone onstage, rejected by a contemptuous Troilus and even by her uncle Pandarus, a pathetic, broken sex object, lipstick smeared over her lower face. And gunfire splutters offstage, by way of suggesting that the play is for all seasons, not least our own.

And so it is. *Troilus* marks the debut of the sub-company that Nunn has formed at the National, and it will, I'm sure, do stronger work when its members know each other better. But you cannot leave even an unevenly acted production without seeing why the play has been revived twice by the RSC in the past three years, is now in the Olivier rep, and may get yet another showing in the West End this autumn. Is there a piece that better embodies the disillusioned soul of the departing century? "Nothing but wars and lechery," repeats the arch-cynic Thersites, and, yes, that is what our era's dictators and scientists have left us feeling about honour, chivalry and love.

Does Nunn mean to convey some specific anxiety by setting white Greeks against Trojans who, with the illogical exception of David Bamber's Pandarus, are all black? If so, that seems more dubious, for Shakespeare makes it clear (witness Hector's refusal to fight with his cousin Ajax) that both sides belong to one big, brawling family. Moreover, isn't it odd that a theatre which has often and effectively asked us to blind our imaginations to its actors' colour should suddenly expect us to make a point of noticing it?

That's not to say there are no differences between Shakespeare's Trojans and his Greeks. As Nunn suggests with *Arabian Nights* costumes, exotic cushions and flaming tripods, the home side is the more romantic. The grimy-faced visitors in their battered leather greatcoats are the more practical and realistic. It is not surprising that Cressida betrays Troilus with Greek Diomed, or that Achilles murders Hector, in this production in a brutally opportunist way. That's how a wicked world wags.

Though the battle scenes are almost too carefully drilled, Nunn achieves some fine visual effects on the gravel circle, backed by a timber wall, that serves for a set. But I have seen nearly every role better played. The main exception is Roger Allam's Ulysses, who is incisive, sly, articulate and so embittered by the war that the very word "Troy" is a furious sneer. Denis Quilley gives emotional reality to Nestor, usually a senile dodderer; Bamber's Pandarus minces and winces to splendidly voyeuristic effect; and Peter de Jersey makes a passionate Troilus.

But others struggle, among them Jasper Britton's Thersites, whose facial sores are angrier than his innards; Dhobi Oparei, whose Hector seems oddly precious; and Sophie Okonedo, who works too hard to motivate Cressida. I liked the idea of a loose-limbed extrovert who ventures way out of her emotional depth, and morally destroys herself in order physically to survive; but there is too much signalling of feeling, too much verbal strain, too many words that come in italics or, I fear, capitals.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE



Shakespeare under strain: Jasper Britton (top), Peter de Jersey, Sophie Okonedo and David Bamber at the NT

Loyalist's loyalty ends at home

Trust
Ambassadors

Chekhov warned playwrights that if they bring a firearm on stage it must eventually go off, and his advice remains sound, even though he was writing at a time when guns made infrequent appearances in domestic drama. Plenty lurk in Gary Mitchell's new play, set in a Protestant home on the Rathcoole estate in Belfast, where weaponry bought from an absconding British soldier is passed to the UDA.

For much of the time the guns are just silent merchandise, but at last one character pulls out a pistol and takes aim. We must expect it to kill someone, although we know enough about plays to guess the wrong person may be hit. What happens is that Mitchell ignores Chekhov's warning, yet so tense is the point his play has now reached that the gun *not* going off creates more of an explosion than any bullet.

This is the defining moment of the family drama he has developed within the violent social drama, like a shrub all but stifled in bindweed. Patrick O'Kane's Geordie is the big man of the local loyalist community, charismatic but merciless; his very stillness signals danger and his savage outbursts of anger are roared from a great gape of a mouth.

His 15-year-old son is a disappointment on several grounds, shy and prone to headaches, but Geordie is not beyond extending a fond tolerance to the lad's awkward endeavours to head for manhood. The scene in the club where Geordie and his sidekick Arrty (Colum Convey) educate the boy in social skills provides a comic interlude in the gathering menace.

Conflicts develop with intermediaries in the big deal but even more crucially between Geordie and his wife, Margaret; and although the significance of their dispute is not immediately clear, and at times hard to follow, what Mitchell achieves is the creation of a woman steadily becoming certain that defence of her son is vastly more important to her than any other loyalty. Laine Megaw's subtle performance takes us from her loyalist loyalty — where she sparks our initial surprise at her practised handling of a suspect — to the climactic catastrophe.

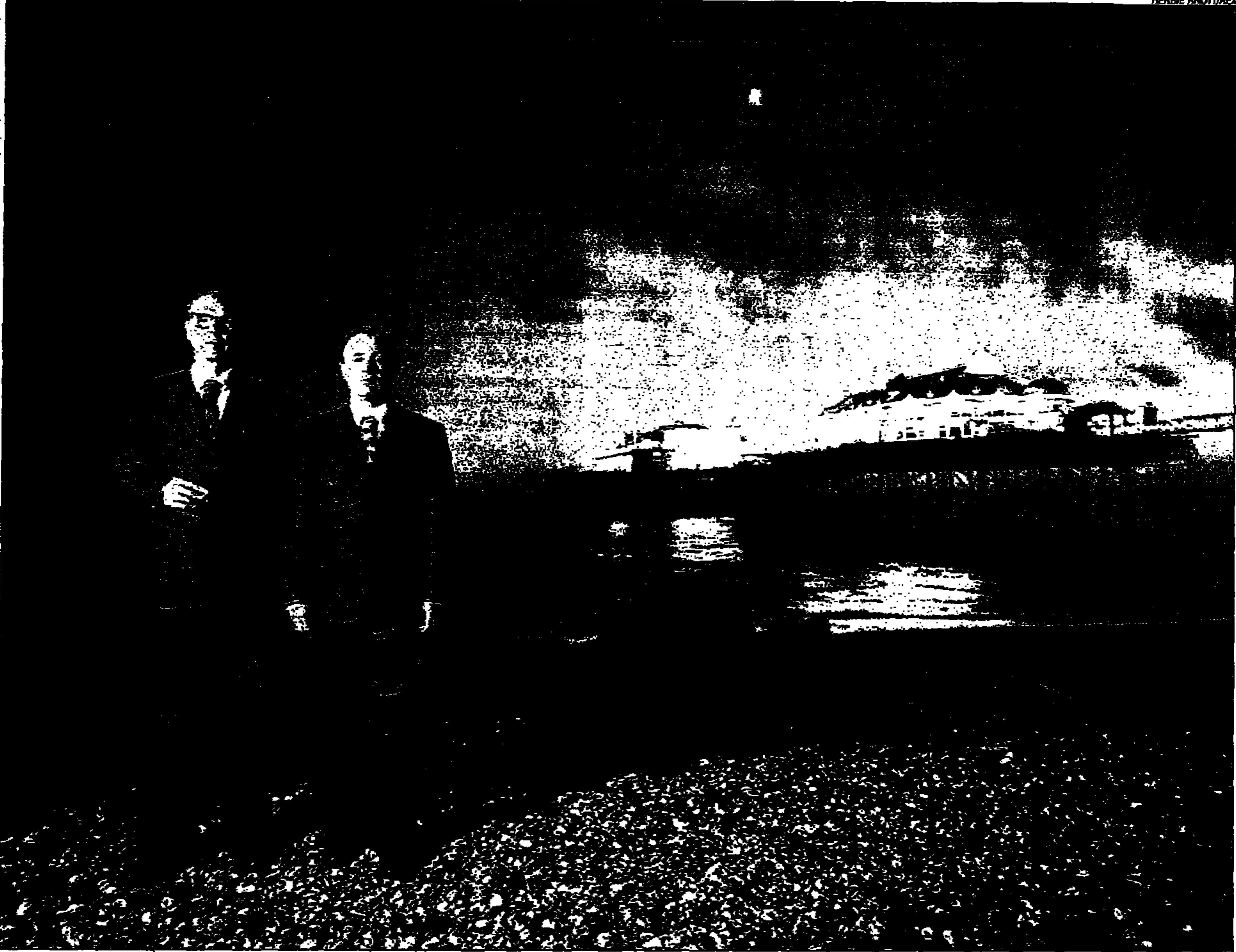
Megaw's tight, half-smiling features can break into a wrath as unnerving as her man's, and tighten again into a bridge-burning resolve after showing us, through tone of voice and twist of shoulders, how the casebook of her life has altered.

Powerful direction by Mick Gordon and not an orange sash on view.

JEREMY KINGSTON

Funny peculiar, funny ha ha

VISUAL ART: As a new book sheds light on Gilbert and George, **Rachel Campbell-Johnston** pays them a call



The end of the pier show: George and Gilbert ("our motto is that nothing matters") take a break from the serious business of producing art to sniff the sea air in Brighton

I ring on the doorbell and listen for the footsteps — two sets measuring the boards. Then the door swings open on to London's living artworks, on to two tweed suits and two extended hands and four burnished brogues planted evenly on the floor. Clearly I am looking at one of Gilbert and George's most polished pieces: their "interview sculpture".

What is it about matching people that unnerves? I flutter nervously under the imperturbable double gaze. "Coffee?" suggests George. "It's only instant," adds Gilbert. "Sugar?" asks George. Gilbert pours milk.

Their manners are formidable. Inside the polished passageways of a Dickensian home, done out in high Victorian style with Puginesque furnishings and leather-bound books, there are no traces of the artists' own works — nothing of the disturbing, defecatory subject-matter that has so shocked or outraged or delighted the critics. But now a biographical portrait completed just before his death last year by the writer Daniel Farson, their longstanding fan and drinking companion, has cast some light on the enigmatic artists.

The long, chill studio space into which I am led is perfectly bare. "We are very organised," George informs me. "Very organised indeed." The contrast is startling between the men standing stiff-spined before me — the taller George, bespectacled and well spoken, with a silver pen in the top pocket of his immaculately tailored suit; the shorter Gilbert, with a soulful brown gaze, an Italian accent and a comb in the top pocket of *his* immaculately tailored suit — and the works which the two have done together since they first met at St Martins art school some 30 years ago. What could pieces with titles like *Sperm Eaters* or *Spit on Shit* have to do with this fastidious duo?

The artists gleefully agree. "We had a friend who was poorly in hospital," Gilbert tells me. "We sent him a card. One of our own: *Spunk and Tears*. He put it on his bedside table and the nurses loved it. And when we went to visit our friend they were all very charming." "But after we had left," George goes on, "they said they couldn't believe that we were the artists of the card. 'Not those respectable men!' they cried." The respectable pair collapse into chiming laughter.

The laughter connects the artists to their work. I had assumed they would be grave, as unsmiling as their portraits. I was wrong. In their studio Gilbert and George pull out plans of their new work. They have spent the last few months riffling through a copy of the London A-Z picking out all the places with unfortunate names: Spankers Hill Wood, Spert Street, Swallow Street, Organ Lane. They laugh uncontrollably at the double entendres. Excitedly they riffle through contact prints of urine photographed under a microscope. "Piss 1-100" the box is labelled. "Aren't they beautiful!" Gilbert cries, admiring crystalline patterns. "Our paintings make people look at piss for the first time and see that it is beautiful," explains Gilbert. "Beauty has an amazing power," George declares.

They show me pictures of themselves, naked, or with trousers round their ankles, or bending over, buttocks splayed. "Of course we feel vulnerable when we hang them in a gallery," says George. "But people find their own vulnerability in our art as well. Our art is about emotion. We are creating the visual language of suffering, or awkwardness, or ecstasy. And we are more frank about our art than any other artist."

And yet if, as they profess, their art is their life, they are contradicting themselves. They covet their privacy. No one is ever allowed into their bedroom. Gilbert's former marriage is airbrushed out of their biography. "We aren't prepared to provide a list of all the people we have ever shagged. We don't think that's helpful," George closes the conversation primly.

But perhaps this hiatus is the most interesting aspect of their art, articulating the paradoxical and painful dissonance of the human state, as at one moment we put on our public face, the next crouch trouserless on a lavatory pan.

And perhaps this is the "consolation" which Gilbert and George offer those who go to see their art: that the higher up the tree of life we climb, the better the gawping masses below can see our bottoms. Nothing can matter too much when you remember that.

"No. Nothing matters. Our motto is that nothing matters," Gilbert says. "Nothing matters, nothing matters," Gilbert agrees.

● Gilbert and George: A Portrait *by Daniel Farson is published by HarperCollins this week, price £19.99*

AROUND THE GALLERIES

SOME artists almost choose to make themselves outsiders. When **Peter Samuelson** was rediscovered he was living in deepest Oxfordshire, supporting himself by restoring oriental carpets and lending a hand on a nearby farm. Bizarre, one might think, for an artist of such evident talent and approachability.

After training in Paris and living during the war years in The Netherlands, he returned to England and disappeared from the art world, running a lodging house in Earls Court instead. But he always painted and drew: a lot of handsome young men drifted in and out of his lodging house, and he developed his own meticulously realistic style of portraiture.

Finally he stopped painting altogether, and took it up again only with the stimulus of outside interest in his art, when he was in his early seventies. This no doubt explains why this first cull from the attic full of paintings he left at his death makes its appearance in the Cotswolds, where he spent his last years. The style (not to mention the subject-matter) is no doubt easier to appreciate now, post-Hockney, than it would have been in the Fifties, in particular Samuelson's exquisite draughtsmanship and his subtle and delicate colouring.

Brian Sinfield Gallery, 150 High St, Burford, Oxfordshire (01993 824464), daily 10am-5.30pm, until March 27

☐ **Liam Hanley** is by no means an outsider, but he seems to keep himself sedulously upon the fringes, as though his art is somehow too private to be launched on the great indiscriminate merry-go-round of the West End art world — it has an air of keeping its secrets. Hanley paints with single-minded dedication, his work mostly on that elusive borderline between representation and abstraction.

A few years ago he became obsessed with the patterns made by ploughed fields: in this new show his focus seems to have shifted to the sea coast. Most of these small pictures find rough squares and cubes even in the sea itself, though they avoid excessive rigidity through the occasional intervention of curling winds and waves. The colouring this time is also more vibrant.

Beardsmore Gallery, 22-24 Prince of Wales Road, NW5 (0171-485 0923), Tues-Fri 10am-6pm, Sat noon-6pm, until March 31

JOHN RUSSELL TAYLOR

Richard Cork on an eerie video installation about the Greenham missile base

You thought the Cold War was finished?

Once a well-publicised target for women campaigning against the nightmare of nuclear annihilation, Greenham Common has now lapsed into disuse. The US military's English base served as an arsenal for cruise missiles, and Greenham became a symbol of apocalyptic menace, its placid rural setting only throwing into relief the horrifying prospect of a planet laid waste by irreversible conflagration.

Jane and Louise Wilson are young enough never to have witnessed Greenham's former notoriety. But they insist, in their haunting exhibition at the Lisson Gallery, on bringing the dormant base back to an eerie semblance of life. By calling their video projection *Gamma* the Wilson twins imply that Greenham's radioactive past is not forgotten. And in order to show how disquieting the abandoned buildings remain, the two artists take us on a journey to the heart of places where missiles used to lie in permanent expectation.

Even as we enter the gallery, amplified sounds of rising and descending lifts, the ominous hum emitted by machines and the snapping-shut of mighty metal doors assail our ears. Once inside, we find large screens positioned on opposite walls. Anyone wanting a comprehensive viewing is obliged to stand between them, and turn continually from one set of images to the other. Even here, though, it is impossible to catch everything.

The perpetual swivelling makes us disorientated and incapable of absorbing all the sensations competing for our attention. The sense of bewilderment generated is surely akin to the Wilsons' own reaction when they penetrated the arsenal for the first time.

They must have felt that only fragments of Greenham's former reality lingered there. In this respect they operate like detectives struggling to assess evidence at a locale long since abandoned. Their cameras change speed in response to the scenes in front of the lens. When scrutinising an enormous hangar-like structure, they slow down. This desolate space seems frozen in a state of suspense. Although its personnel and equipment have long departed, the suggestion that they may return hangs in the air. The Wilsons' willingness to remain there appears motivated by the suspicion that something may happen.

But before long the camera starts to travel briskly down narrow concrete passageways, claustrophobic and redolent of secrecy. No sooner have we become accustomed to a fast pace than it slows once again, gingerly moving towards a door into a bare room.

Two blue plastic chairs sit there, as if recently vacated. The sound of ticking adds to the unease, a mood heightened when we find ourselves confronted by a close-up of an official form headed "Soviet Inspection". The words may well refer to the Greenham base's current status, defunct and yet subject to an INF treaty that permits scrutiny by Russian military at any time until 2001. No sign of such a visit can be detected in *Gamma*.

But sometimes the Wilsons compound the mystery by registering an unexplained human presence. At one point, after travelling very fast over arrows set into the floor, the camera settles on a flashing control panel. An instruction issues an urgent warning: "Do Not Touch Unless Directed By The Launch Centre." But an enigmatic finger seems to flout the order by pressing a button, and soon stockinged legs strut across a mirrored floor whose reflections add to the perceptual confusion.


Shadows of doom: *Mirrored Figure* from *Gamma* by Jane and Louise Wilson

More figures appear outside, hooded this time and moving along the top of grimy walls at night. They look like soldiers on patrol, but we are not allowed to look at them properly before *Gamma* sets off on another expedition. We descend to the bowels of the building and a space lined with containers. The strangest sector of the base is located down here, in a chamber where long plastic strips dangle from the ceiling. They partially hide a cartoon-style image of a snarling, running dog newly freed from a broken neck-chain. This graffiti-like hound takes on a powerful force. It resembles the canine equivalent of a cruise missile, released from its moorings in order to pulverise the enemy.

By focusing on the quiescent objects still lurking in the Greenham gloom, the Wilsons succeed in reactivating its past. They scrutinise the Decontamination Chamber, and track past a sequence of directional arrows that might have strayed from a Francis Bacon painting. Indeed, many of the bleak spaces investigated by *Gamma's* camera are reminiscent of the rooms where Bacon's figures assert their convulsive presence. The Wilsons, who admire his work, must realise that it cannot be disentangled from the existential anxiety of the Cold War era.

Nor can Greenham, despite the waning of hostility between the superpowers. Wherever we are taken in the building, its echoing emptiness fails to offer reassurance. However irrefutable the closure of the base may be, its redundant interior still seems freighted with worrying memories. The dangers and fears that brought this arsenal into existence will never entirely go away. They remain in an arrested state, just as the Wilsons themselves appeared in an earlier video sitting side by side in a hypnotic trance.

But *Gamma's* mood is markedly different from the hypnosis video. The latter work was shown at the Lisson a few years ago, when an altar-like flight of steps leading to the screen enhanced its serenity. Now, however, the space is occupied by a disturbing presence. Moving out of *Gamma*, we walk up identical steps to a metal doorway. The door is open, and bears an inscription: "Two Man Policy No Lone Zone."

Nothing prevents us from stepping through to the darkness beyond, a space as empty and enigmatic as the rooms in the arsenal. Standing there, we hear sounds from the *Gamma* video puncturing the silence. Another open doorway, dramatically spotlit, stands ahead, offering a chance to leave. But the exit sign glowing above it conveys no sense of welcome escape. After everything the Wilsons have done in their troubling show, the word reads instead like a final warning that the post-Greenham world will never be truly free from the threat of obliteration.

● *Lisson Gallery, 52-54 Bell St, London NW1 (0171-724 2739) until April 1*

■ **LISTINGS**

Manchester's war drama

ARTS

■ **MUSIC**

André's party pieces

RECOMMENDED TODAY

Guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Marit Hargie

LONDON

DRACULA: Northern Ballet Theatre brings Christopher Gable's dance version of Bram Stoker's chiller to London for a first showing. Denis Malinkine dances the role of the toothy count to Philip Feeney's powerful score.
Sadler's Wells (0171-713 6000). Opens tonight, 7.30pm.

FORBIDDEN BROADWAY: A second try by New York's long-running intimate revue (showbiz jokes mostly) to adapt for London audiences.
Jermyn Street Theatre (0171-287 2875). Opens tonight, 7.30pm.

LOW FLYING AIRCRAFT: In a future transformed by the vast city of Heathrow four ordinary people try to cope. Dominic Hill directs a new play by Jane Coles.
Orange Tree (0181-940 3633). Previews from tonight, 7.45pm.



Kennedy plays with the CBSO in Birmingham

ELSEWHERE

BIRMINGHAM: Trading these days under his surname only, the virtuoso violinist Kennedy joins the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra conducted by Simon Rattle for a performance of Sofia Gubaidulina's intense Violin Concerto framed by works by Kurtag and Birtwistle.
Symphony Hall (0121-212 3333). Tonight, 7.30pm.

LIVERPOOL: Gerard Schwarz, usually to be found on the podium in front of the Seattle SO, returns here after a three-year absence to conduct the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra in an evening of classics used in sci-fi movies such as 2001 — a Space Odyssey and Alien. The programme features Johann and Richard Strauss, Bach, and Howard Hanson. With Ian Tracey as organ soloist.
Philharmonic Hall (0151-709 3789). Tonight, 7.30pm.

MANCHESTER: Dreaming is Peter Barnes's new drama set in the aftermath of the Wars of the Roses. Gerard Murphy leads a party of renegades in Matthew Lloyd's strongly cast production.
Royal Exchange (0161-833 9833). Previews from tonight, 7.30pm.

NEW WEST END SHOWS

Jeremy Kingston's choice of theatre showing in London

■ House full, returns only ◪ Some seats available □ Seats at all prices

□ **ANIMAL CRACKERS:** Ben Keaton, Joe Alessi and Toby Sedgwick play the three maniacs in a stage version of the Marx Brothers movie. First seen at Manchester's Royal Exchange.
Lyric (0171-494 5045).

□ **TRUST:** Patrick O'Kane plays a Belfast Mr Fixit whose skills disastrously fail his own family. Mick Gordon directs new Gary Mitchell drama.
Ambassadors (0171-565 5000).

□ **BLUE HEART:** Caryl Churchill's wonderfully inventive pair of plays, revealing family troubles by way of tricks with words and time. Max Stafford-Clark directs for Out of Joint.
Pleasance Theatre (0171-609 1800).

□ **SLAVA'S SNOWSHOW:** The excellent Russian clown and mime artist Slava Polunin returns, with new material, new clowns as well as his unforgettable finale.
Piccadilly Theatre (0171-369 1734).

■ **SPEER:** Klaus Maria Brandauer directs and plays the title role of Hitler's master architect in Esther Vilar's drama. With Sven Eric Bechtolf.
Almeida (0171-359 4404).

□ **TROILUS AND CRESSIDA:** Trevor Nunn and John Caird direct black Trojans and white Greeks, with Peter de Jersey and Sophie Okonedo as the doomed lovers. With Roger Allam, David Bamber, Jasper Britton and Oliver Cotton. See review, p. 34.
Olivier (0171-452 3000).

◪ **MACBETH:** Rufus Sewell and Sally Dexter play the superstitious thane and his missis in John Crowley's neo-brutalist production.
Queens, W1 (0171-494 5041).

◪ **COPENHAGEN:** Heisenberg mysteriously calls on Niels Bohr in wartime Denmark. Michael Blakemore directs Michael Frayn's engrossing play
Duchess (0171-494 5075).

FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE

James Christopher's choice of the latest movies

NEW RELEASES

PATCH ADAMS (12): Robin Williams stars in this absurd movie about a doctor who wants to cure the world with laughter. Director Tom Shadyac extracts an obscene amount of sentiment with little anaesthetic.

PLEASANTVILLE (12): Ingenious spoof of American family values. Great performances from Tobey Maguire, Jeff Daniels, and Reese Witherspoon.

CENTRAL STATION (15): Walter Salles's Brazilian road movie creates fabulous chemistry between a boy in search of his identity, and a cynical ex-teacher in search of her soul.

SCHIZOPOLIS (18): Steven Soderbergh's experimental satire on corporate anxiety is utter gibberish, with camera angles and dialogue to match.

CURRENT

BELOVED (15): Oprah Winfrey is surprisingly powerful as a runaway slave haunted by poltergeists, lynch mobs, and a dead daughter. Jonathan Demme's overlong film fails, however, to get inside the festering heart of Toni Morrison's Pulitzer Prize winner.

FESTEN (15): Thomas Vinterberg's biting, black, Danish farce features a disastrous family reunion. Shot with hand-held cameras, it manages to look spontaneous, ghastly, and deliciously voyeuristic.

THE 39 STEPS (U): Hitchcock's witty take on Buchan's ripping yarn is full of fabulous set pieces. Robert Donat's smooth bachelor dashes across Scotland pursued by scampering police and ruthless spies.

THE THIN RED LINE (15): A glittering cast of American soldiers lose their sanity in the South Pacific during the Second World War. Terrence Malick's artistic masterpiece stars Sean Penn, Jim Caviezel, Ben Chaplin, and Nick Nolte.

YOU'VE GOT MAIL (PG): Bullet-proof romantic blockbuster with Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan who fall in love on the Internet. Written and directed by Nora Ephron.

Climax soars to a Mutter

CONCERTS: The stars came out to wish André Previn a happy 70th birthday at the Barbican

Two clumps of greenery clung to each side of the Barbican stage, like weeds growing on a garden wall. Not much to look at for André Previn's 70th birthday gala concert. But for this final concert in the London Symphony Orchestra's birthday series the decorations were there where it mattered, in the music. Not to mention the guests. Previn's party had nothing but the best: Anne-Sophie Mutter and her violin, Kiri Te Kanawa and her larynx. There was also a gleaming new car in the foyer, advertising the evening's sponsors, the Rover Group.

At the end of the evening, the orchestra prematurely struck up *Happy Birthday to You* (the actual date is April 6). This was the worst music of the evening. The best by far was Beethoven's Violin Concerto, resplendent in Mutter's hands. In the 19 years since her teenage recording with Karajan, Mutter has speeded up, knocking a minute off her famously leisurely first movement. The poetry and delicacy have increased too.

During the larghetto, she made pianissimo sounds tender enough to make the gods weep; and, throughout, her notes sang so beautifully that the conventional display of the concerto's cadenza seemed beside the point. Previn, for his part, kept a firm grip, never letting the chunks of orchestral fire consume the violin in the opening allegro, keeping the larghetto variations rapt, releasing tension in the finale with a rondo knees-up. This was heavenly music-making.

It was also an impossible act to follow, as Te Kanawa discovered. Her party piece was the final scene from Strauss's *Capriccio*. Mellifluous singing, to be sure, graciously aristocratic in style. But the tone was a little lacking — if she were parquet flooring, you'd want to get out the polish and buff her — and enunciation sometimes lost out to the big Straussian orchestra throbbing behind.

For the concert's final number, the *Rosenkavalier* suite, the orchestra grew bigger still: whooping horns, a piquant celeste, an army of double-basses. As a musical structure, this cut-and-paste assemblage of 1945, possibly the work of the conductor Arthur Rodzinski, totters most ungainly, one extract piled on to another, with a threadbare little coda tacked on top. But it allowed Previn and the LSO to let rip, and sent the audience waltzing off happily into the Barbican concrete.

GEOFF BROWN



ANDRE CAMARA

Anne-Sophie Mutter joins André Previn after stealing the show at his birthday party

Homer fires kept burning

CBSO/Rattle
Festival Hall

Nicholas Maw's *Odyssey* is famous for being the longest unbroken span of music in the orchestral repertory. But, as Simon Rattle pointed out in a talk introducing his performance of this quixotic 95-minute work, that is also perhaps the least interesting thing about a score that is epic in every sense: although its title has Classical allusions, it evokes rather a long spiritual journey away from 20th-century musical ideologies and towards tonality.

Rattle has championed the work energetically, and with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra on stage he illustrated points he was making about the piece, giving the audience clear signposts from the "time chord" that punctuates the sections to the enormous main theme from which so much is developed. But whether *Odyssey* (completed in 1987) really belonged best as part of this *Towards the Millennium* survey of music from the 1980s is another matter: it developed as a tangent, albeit a colossal one, to what was important during the previous decade, and its performance here only underlined the slight British bias of this festival's programming.

Yet *Odyssey* deserves to be heard, and if British musicians do not play it, who will? In spite — or perhaps because — of its roots in the symphonic tradition, it is a work that could only have been written when it was by a British composer, but it is not a symphony: the structure of its four main parts and the logic of it in relation to Bruckner and Sibelius are but aspects of this very personal piece.



Rattle drew a performance of total conviction

It is easy to say that *Odyssey* is personal to the point of self-indulgence, and there are moments — long moments — where the thick scoring and slow pace pall. But it has a pulse of its own, and given the great length (44 bars) of the main theme it demands space in which to grow. The theme itself, ranging across wide intervals and sounding both passionate and melancholy, is first heard on the cellos before being absorbed into the rich mosaic of the piece.

This was a performance of total conviction, which Rattle built unerringly. The almost shapeless opening, where music rises from the growling depths eventually to attain clarity, unfolded majestically, and the pastoral episodes of Part 2 and meditative beauty of Part 3 made their full impact.

Before the brutal climaxes which signal the Epilogue arrived, the CBSO weaved through the fluttering textures with virtuosic ease, and the final "homecoming" in an unadorned E flat came as the relief it ought to be.

JOHN ALLISON

Warm in Betty's shoes

Betty Carter's residencies at Ronnie Scott's became such an institution that her death left an eerie silence. It took only one chorus to appreciate why Nnenna Freelon is regarded as a candidate to assume Carter's mantle. While it may not have been always an emotionally compelling performance — the technician sometimes got the better of the poet in her — this was as confident a debut London has seen in a while.

Carter must have grown tired of hearing reviewers compare her singing style to a horn player's. Freelon takes the same instrument-based approach, ornamenting each bar and rearranging the thrust of the lyrics to suit her own purposes. Her warm, rich voice has the suppleness of a Sarah Vaughan. On ballads she stretches vowels in the manner of the best gospel singers.

JAZZ

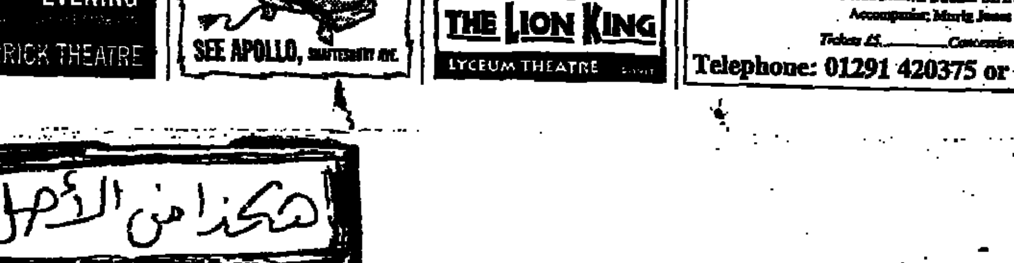
On occasion, the songs suffered from the bravura treatment. In her passion for improvising, Freelon seems reluctant to let a melody breathe naturally, and she is over-fond of shoehorning tunes into stream-of-consciousness medleys: *Some Day My Prince Will Come* merged into *Just Friends*, *Nature Boy* and *My Favourite Things*. Audiences have to work hard to keep up.

The comparison with Carter extends, above all, to her choice of musicians. Not only has Freelon arrived with one of Carter's former drummers, the admirably crisp Will Terrill, but she clearly believes in bringing her sidemen right into the foreground. The pianist Takana Miyamoto makes a particularly sensitive accompanist, while Wayne Batchelor's brisk but controlled bass figures gave the quartet all the ballast it required.

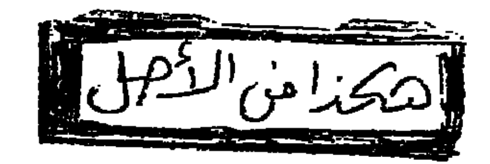
Adding a percussionist was a bold move, and Beverley Botsford's subtle colours brought an extra dimension to arrangements which were already a cut above the average.

The feminist sentiments of Nina Simone's *Four Women* were an audacious departure, introduced over strident bass and percussion. Freelon's proselytising instincts extend to her somewhat syrupy between-song chat. If she ever gives up the bandstand, she could set up her own talk show.

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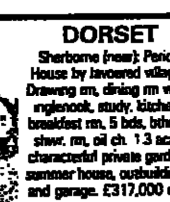
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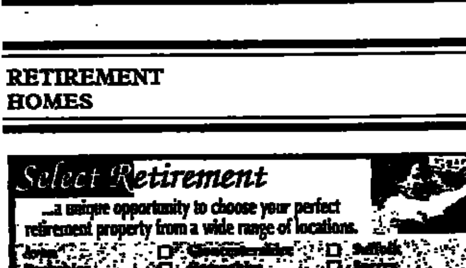


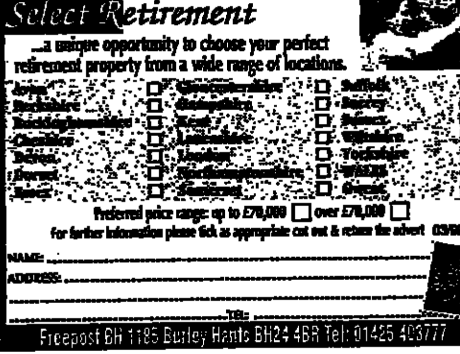
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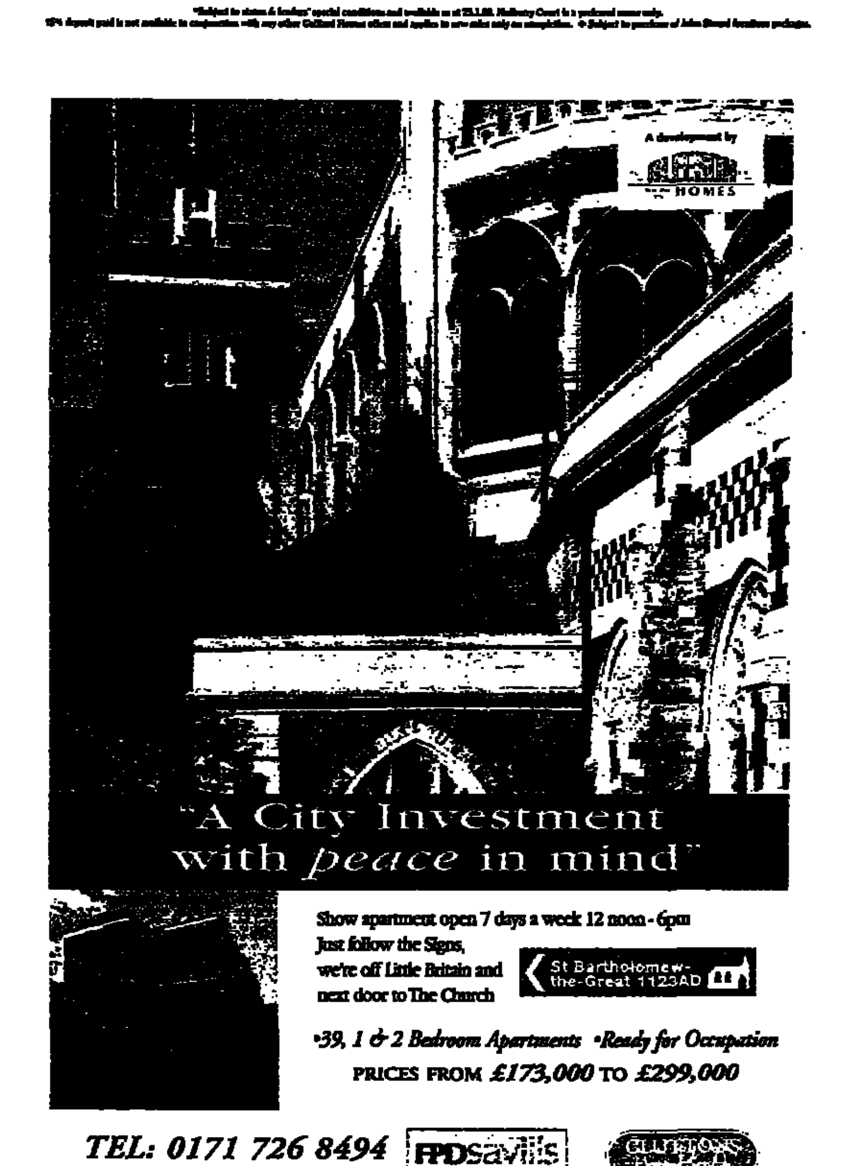
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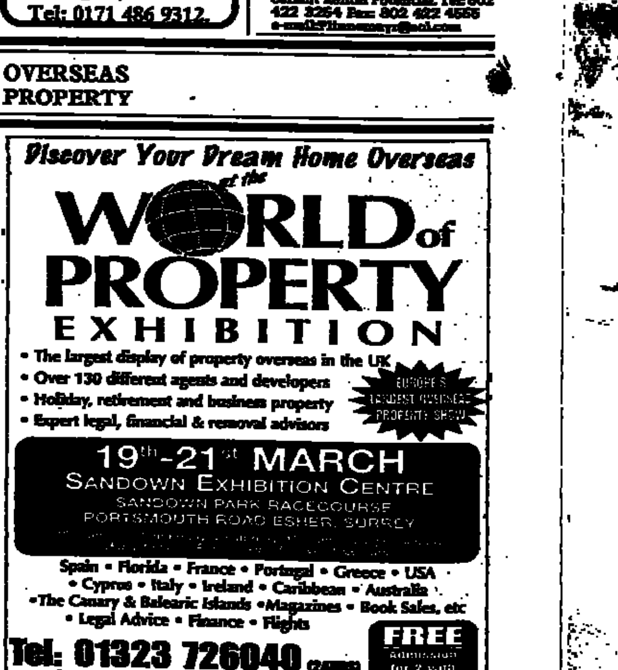
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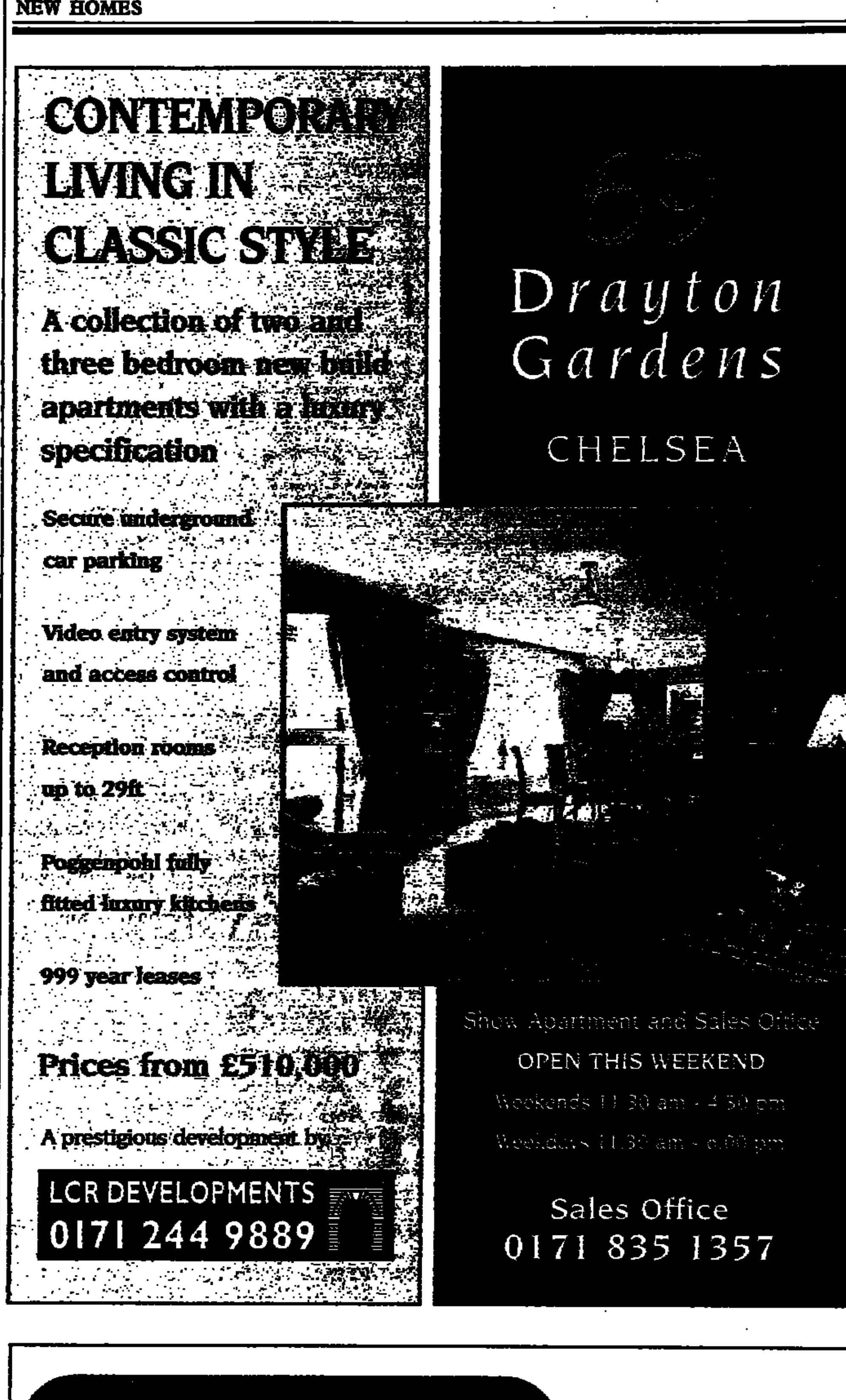
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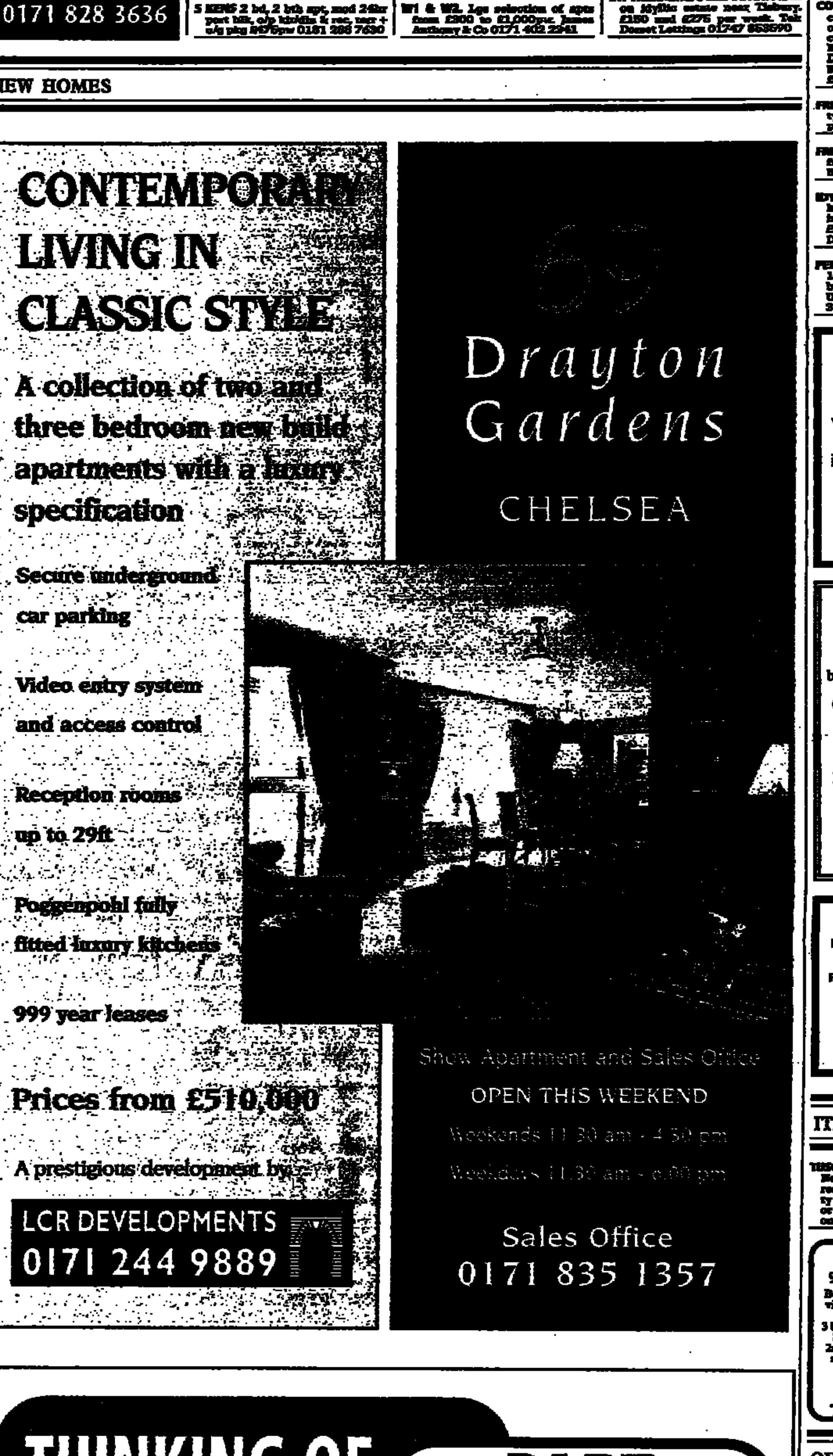
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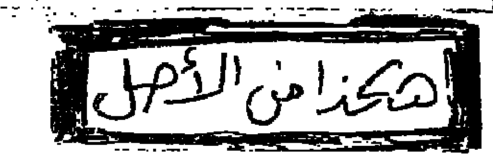
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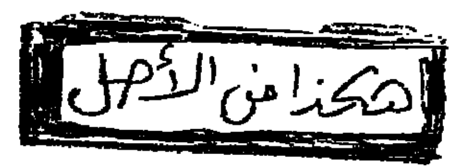
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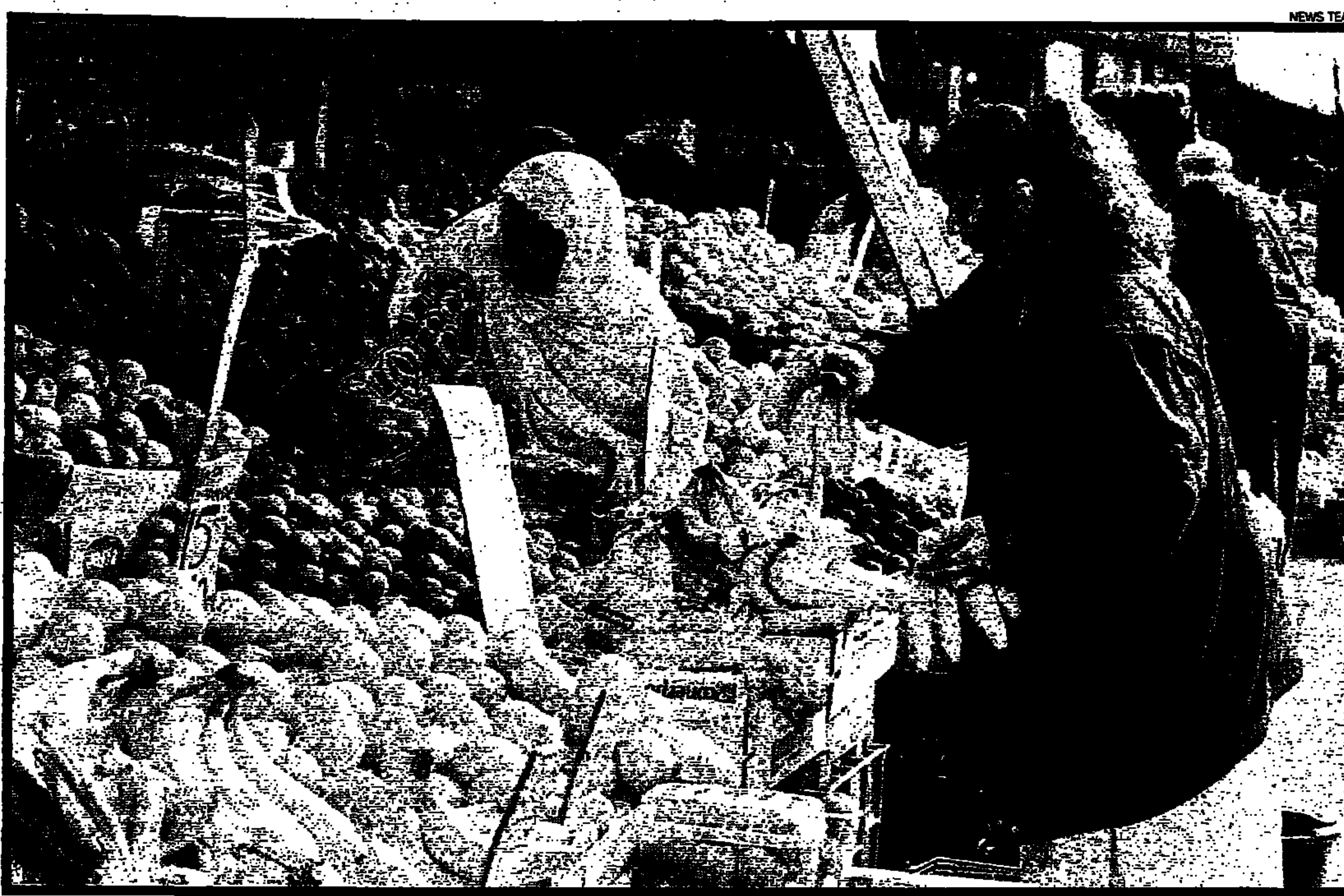






Inner cities look East

New housing can reflect the needs of ethnic communities, says Stella Bingham


NEWS TEAM

A consultation with inner-city residents resulted in a report, spelling out how housing should change to reflect the needs of multicultural communities

Projects designed to regenerate inner-city wastelands, usually concentrate on housing shortages, family size, density and design. The ethnic origin of those likely to be living in them is rarely taken into account. But two schemes address the needs and aspirations of multicultural urban dwellers.

In Birmingham the Saltley and Small Heath Single Regeneration Budget scheme covers a district with a population of 55,000. "The area has always had an itinerant population and now the important group is South Asian. Some areas are 70 per cent South Asian," says Wendy Shillam, a partner with Shillam & Smith, the community architects for the scheme.

"It is essentially a Victorian suburb but the housing is in a very bad state, built on heathland and former brick pits. A lot of the property is owner-occupied but often it is not in good condition because the owners haven't the wherewithal for the upkeep."

Another problem is sheer size. "South Asian families tend to live in large, extended households which the average two-up, two-down cannot accommodate. Often they would buy two and knock them into one, but such homes are very unadaptable. The project aims to improve and provide more housing and regenerate the area. Our aim is to have more community-led strategies," she says.

The first challenge was to find out what residents actually wanted from the scheme. "We linked up with the mobile library to talk to people. And we instituted a public art project, which helped us to communicate with two groups we felt we were missing — Asian women and children. We addressed some of the housing issues they wanted, such as the quality of external space and healthier living."

The year-long consultation resulted in a detailed report about how housing should change to reflect the needs of the population. "Residents wanted flexibility, the ability to put two houses together or split them apart," Ms Shillam says. "Aesthetically, they wanted to get away from the Victorian Imperialist style. And they wanted a low-energy building that considered the ecology.

"Larger and more flexible homes would be more attractive not only to South Asians, but to people with elderly relatives, older children or those starting a business at home."

The first results of the public consultation will be in startling contrast to the traditional red-brick terraces. Some of the 34 flat-roofed, concrete houses will be grouped round a courtyard to reflect the Asian homeland pattern of living. Exteriors will be robust, possibly brightly painted, simple, easy to repair or change and designed to grow old gracefully.

"None of the internal partitions is structural, so you can change and add on as you have the money," she says. "We're building homes 20 per cent bigger for the same money, so they won't have a fully fitted kitchen and all the other things you get in a spec building. You can walk in and live there and add on as you want to and can afford to. There will be no brass doorknobs and microwaves but you will have space."

Shillam & Smith hopes to obtain planning permission soon. "We had to be careful to convince the planners that the houses wouldn't go out of fashion in a very short time. But the construction techniques are tried and tested and we have the support of the community," Ms Shillam says. "A number of developers are already showing interest.

"The housing addresses the specialist uses not only of the South Asians, but also the wider issues of how we want to live. This project helps us to make living in inner cities more acceptable and attractive."

A similar idealism is at the heart of the project which inspires Saif Ahmad, the chief executive of the North London Muslim Housing Association.

The association, which has 400 homes in the London boroughs of Tower Hamlets, Newham, Hackney and Waltham Forest, has unveiled a ten-year, £500 million programme to build 10,000 homes in some of London's most deprived districts.

"Rome wasn't built in a day and you have to have the right vision," Mr Ahmad says. "The main point is to regenerate the community, to foster tolerance, understanding, care for each other and to enrich British society with its diverse cultural heritage."

There are about 250,000 Muslims in the four boroughs and Mr Ahmad would like them to be seen as a unifying force. "We are not a fifth column. I would like to create a community for people who live here and love it. Tower Hamlets and Newham are 50 per cent Muslim. Some council estates are 95 per cent Bangladeshi, which creates an insular community. If 50 per cent were local and 50 per cent from various Muslim ethnic groups, that would create a diverse community. People often say integration at what price. We say integration through tolerance," he says.

Raising the money is the first hurdle. "We calculate that there are untapped resources that go East, which can be used to regenerate communities here. In Britain and outside there are individuals eager to see the scheme go through. Most housing schemes are based on private finance and government grants. We are trying to find the mechanism with which we can tap into government resources for a head start, but it is a new model and we need to talk to a lot of people."

The association plans a first phase of 50 to 100 houses. "We are trying to identify a locality with the need and a favourable host community. Once the first project goes through, we can go to the Government with an example. Once the model starts, after three or four years the scheme will gain momentum," he says.

Mr Ahmad hopes to incorporate Islamic architectural influences of the sort seen in Spain and Portugal into basic British house designs. "We are discussing this with architects and English Heritage and will adjust according to the rules. This is about regeneration in quite deprived areas. There is a religious obligation to help out."

SMART MOVES

Lord Soper's house for sale

■ THE home of Lord Soper, the radical preacher who spread messages of faith at Speakers' Corner for 70 years, is for sale for £600,000. Lord Soper who died in December, aged 95, was still preaching in his last year of life, despite being confined to a wheelchair. The detached three-bedroom house in Bigwood Road, in the heart of Hampstead Garden Suburb, had been his home for 30 years. "It's an attractive double-gabled, cottage-style property with gardens on two sides," says Keith Ackerman, of Benham & Reeves.


Lord Soper: radical messages

■ *PARK HOUSE, in Rutland Gate — located in the grounds of Rutland House, in Knightsbridge — is for sale. The house was built for John Sheepshanks (1787-1863), an art connoisseur and public benefactor whose collections of British paintings included Constables and Turners. It has recently been occupied by the Accademia Italiana, which took it over from the French Consulate in 1989, and is for sale through Michael Tims & Company for £8 million.*

THE former dower house where Beatrix Potter wrote *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* is up for sale. Eastwood House, near Dunkeld in Perthshire, is located on the banks of the River Tay, and few people realise how important Scotland was to the writer and the influence that it had on her.

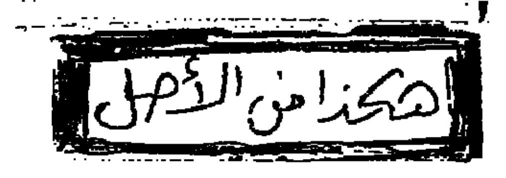
Peter Rabbit: created in Scotland

Potter, who with her brother Bertram had a strict upbringing in Kensington, West London, was educated mainly by governesses. The most exciting moments of her life were holidays in rural Scotland, where Potter met Charlie McIntosh, an amateur naturalist who inspired her fascination with nature. Potter frequently visited Eastwood, where she also created Mrs Tiggywinkle and Jeremy Fisher.

The property's impressive garden, now firmly netted against rabbits, leads down to the river, which is well-stocked with salmon. William Jackson, of Knight Frank, says: "There is a demand for country houses in Perthshire and it is rare that one of such quality is offered for lease. I believe that the addition of the salmon fishing on one of Scotland's most famous rivers will add to the interest."

Knight Frank's Edinburgh office is letting the partly furnished house for an initial period of two to three years. The annual rent, including gardening services, is £20,000.

BEN WAKEHAM


هكذا من الأصل

BOXING: BACKERS LACK INTEREST IN SECOND WORLD TITLE BOUT

Money men knock out hope of Lewis rematch

FROM SRIKUMAR SEN IN NEW YORK

THE rematch on which everyone is putting their hopes for the retrieval of the undisputed world heavyweight championship that was denied Lennox Lewis last weekend is unlikely to materialise. No matter how much Don King might trumpet a second fight the man who puts up the money, Seth Abraham, the head of Time Warner Sports, who backed the first Lewis-Evander Holyfield fight, has ruled it out.

He was categorical in his refusal to put on the rematch. "No rematch, no rematch," Abraham said, after the big fight had ended in a draw at Madison Square Garden. "Holyfield can fight Henry Akinwande."

No doubt Abraham realises that the second bout would not have the same appeal as the first one, nor would he be able to find the extra money that the fighters would be demanding. Their share-out has to be 50-50 this time, which by Holyfield's rates, would mean a guarantee of at least $36 million (about £22 million) by HBO, Time Warner's cable television outlet, compared with the $28 million it put up for the first fight.

That is why the management team of Lewis is to make strenuous efforts to obtain a reversal of the decision that robbed him of the undisputed crown.

Panos Eliades, the head of Panix, the London promotion company behind Lewis, said that it was the only course of action open to them in view of the fact that the rematch could turn out to be no more than talk, even if Holyfield wanted it, because of a lack of financial guarantees.

Eliades has been encouraged by the determination in New York to clean up boxing and the support being given to Lewis by the city's newspapers.

He will be writing to the three New York groups that will be holding separate investigations into the judging in the coming weeks: the New York State Athletic Commission, the Attorney General and the Senate Committee on Investigation, to enlist their help in getting the International Boxing Federation, World Boxing Association and World Boxing Council (WBC) to change the decision.

Governor George Pataki has asked the Athletic Commission to open an inquiry into the contest. Roy M Goodman, chairman of the Senate Committee, said his panel would start hearings on Thursday, and the Attorney General, Eliot Spitzer, said he would be looking into the affair on Friday.

"The governor's concern is to ensure that the public's confidence in the integrity of the matches is protected," Scott Trent, the Athletic Commission spokesman, said. He added that he did not think the inquiries would conflict. "We want to get to the truth. Greater scrutiny can only have the effect of revealing the truth in an expeditious manner, which we welcome."

Goodman, who was at Madison Square Garden to see the fight, said: "It's quite evident that something was bizarre in the ultimate decision."

Goodman certainly will be interested to learn that Eugenia Williams, who gave the bout to Holyfield, was not the judge that Lewis's team had agreed to. She was brought in when it was too late to reject her. No doubt her claim that she could not see because Lewis's back obscured her view will go against her and she will find it difficult to convince anybody that Lewis was constantly obscuring her vision.


MICHAEL FIN

Williams, the American judge who gave the fight to Holyfield, explains her controversial decision to the press yesterday

BOWLS

England overcome selection problems

BY DAVID RHYS JONES

A NEW-LOOK England team survived their first test in the women's home international indoor series at Belfast yesterday, beating Wales, 116-93, but they owed rather too much to one rink to be confident of regaining the team title.

Beryl Alderson, well supported by Carol Ashby, Margaret Dyer and Sandy Hazell, won by 23 shots, which was the margin of England's victory, while the other five rinks were all closely contested affairs.

"With nine new caps, we knew it wasn't going to be easy," Margaret Ruff, the England secretary, said. "It was a good start for the newcomers, though, and we are hoping that, now they have settled down, we will improve."

England took a slim lead from the start and held on until the three-quarter stage, when Wales got their noses in front for a brief spell. The last hour, however, belonged to England, who stamped their authority across the green — especially on Alderson's rink, where they scored 12 shots without reply over the last six ends.

One reason for this season's upheaval is the absence of five of England's leading players — Catherine Anton, Jean Baker, Katherine Hawes, Mary Price and Norma Shaw — who are in Cape Town, preparing for the Atlantic Rim Games which start on Sunday.

"The outdoor authorities have treated us with contempt, and have devalued our British championships, by scheduling an international outdoor event during the winter season," Doreen Miskelly, the secretary of the host nation, said. "All four countries have experienced problems, and have had to replace some of their best players. They didn't consult with us at any stage."

England also had to find a new skip to replace the redoubtable Mavis Steele, who died last summer, after making her fortieth consecutive appearance in the national outdoor side. The new skips did well, Di Hunt and Edna Bessell returning winning cards of 17-14 and 19-16 respectively, and Kath Strutt keeping her defeat at the hands of Linda Evans to a respectable four shots margin.

Doreen Hankin, Strutt's Egham colleague, skipped her rink to a 19-16 win over Janet Ackland, the 1988 world outdoor singles champion and Wales captain, while the rink skipped by Jayne Roylance sank to a 17-12 defeat against Maureen Tanner's quartet.

Results, page 45

SUNNINGDALE FOURSOMES

First round: Old course: F Brown (Heswall) and B Morgan (Monmouth) bt P Talbot and G Ralph (Camberley Heath) 5 and 4; D Clee and Pearson (Walton Park) bt G Nixon and N Johnstone (Brampton) 4 and 2; K Staunton and Z Scotland (Woodcote Park) bt P Simpson (West Berks) and D Craik Jr (Chipping Norton) at 19th; J Head and S Head (Goodwood) bt R Whitehead and J Hall (Batchworth Park) 4 and 3; C Gold and S Hill (The Berkshire) bt M Challener (Sunningdale) and S Drummond (Ascot) one hole; J Higgins (Patshull Park Hotel) and M McGuire (Stoneleigh Deer Park) bt S Godfrey and A Godfrey (St Enodoc) 3 and 2; S Robinson and E Duggleby (Malton and Norton) bt M Soto (Northants Co) and N Preston (Peterborough Milton) 4 and 2; M Plummer (Castle Combe) and I Harrison (Ross-on-Wye) bt W Bennett and D Fisher (Sandy Lodge) 3 and 1; M Searle and P Lawrence (Woodbury Park) bt R Hurd (Manor of Groves) and D Fisher (Sandy Lodge) 2 and 1; A Boatman (Royal Worlington) and C Manson (Sunningdale) bt P Dwyer (Clitheroe) and G Hamerton (Manchester) 3 and 2; J Putt (Sunningdale) and N Mansell (Woodbury Park) bt P Sherman (Ashford) and L Batchelor (Rochester and Cobham) 2 and 1; M Selby and M Palmer (St George's Hill) bt G Hunt and T Dean (Hadsbourne CC) 8 and 6; N Hanson and D Parris (North Foreland) bt J Hall (Ladybank) and R Pace (St Andrews) at 19th; A Robertson (Sunningdale) and A Northridge (Wentworth) bt S Walker and T Whitehouse (Maxstoke Park) 1 up; B Sandy and G Harris (Broome Manor) bt G Potter and K Kelsall (Old Fold Manor) 4 and 3; D March and Wendy Dicks (Regiment Way) bt R Caldwell (Sunningdale) and M Booker (Royal Mid-Surrey) 5 and 4; D Horan and L James (East Dorset) bt D Mackinnon (Fairhaven) and J Cockroft (Nelson) 3 and 2; L Atkinson and L Rusher (Stoke Poges) bt J Jermaine (Sunningdale) and H Wadsworth (ELPGA) 3 and 2; A Carey and J Hemphill (Walmley) bt D Charlton (Tilsworth) and T Charnley (unatt) at 19th; R Crowley and S Elliott (Henbury) bt A Mackenzie (Saunton) and P Anderson (The Berkshire) at 19th; C Rooke (Gerrards Cross) and J Wells (Beverley and ER) bt M Aubrey-Fletcher and R Rimmer (Sunningdale) at 22nd; S Whitlin (Enfield) and S Khan (Toot Hill) bt J Toliday and P Gallon (Chevin) 6 and 5; J King and J Wood (Uncrick) bt C Laurence (Manor of Groves) and L Farmer (Moor Park) 1 up; M Palmer (Mill Ride) and R McFarlane (PGAET) bt G Edge (Mossley) and T Allen (Maxstoke Park) 7 and 6; M Jones (Bolton Open) and C Maroney (unatt) bt S Hurd (Horsforth) and H Clen (Moor Allerton) 2 and 1; G Hughes (Petersfield) and J Lovell (Brokenhurst Manor) bt M Higley (Yeovil) and J Cowgill (Farrington) 3 and 1; L Pickering and M Deal (Enfield) bt M Mow and A Gold (Hamilton) at 19th; L Walters (Chevin) and R McEvoy (Thorpe Hall) bt M Smith and A Fells (Canons Brook) 6 and 4; S Downton (Orsett) and N Ridewood (St George's Hill) bt M Hilton and P Lewin (East Sussex National) 6 and 5; A Tilman (Wildernesse) and K Will (Koole Park) bt D Hart and R Watts (Lambourne) at 19th; S Russell and D Lomas (Woodcote Park) bt L Scarbrow and S Vinnicombe (Leighton Buzzard) 3 and 2; A Wainwright (Garforth) and A Ambler (Malton Golf Centre) bt P Way (The London Club) and D Jones (Dickinson Insurance) at 20th. New course: G Evans (Ealing) and T Andersen (Moor Park) bt A Partridge and N Moult (both Moor Hall) 1 hole; B Mitchell and K Grice (both S Herts) bt D Boxall (Addington Palace) and J Smith (St George's Hill) 3 and 1; S Moir (Letham Grange) and E Wilson (Forfar) bt G Bothwell and J Livesley (both Moor Park) 1 hole; G Harris (Trent Park) and G Evans (N Middlesex) bt M Madill (Carden Park) and C Dowling (Copt Heath) 1 hole; O Lindsey (R Burgess) and B Pile (Woburn) bt P Thomas (D Thomas Ltd) and N Scanlon (Northop) 1 hole; G Sherry (Loch Lomond) and R Thornton (Cardross) bt D Tapping (Verulam) and J Wright (Harpenden Common) at 19th; R Fenwick and C Fogden (both Bognor Regis) bt S Gallagher (Trentham Park) and L Dermott (Northop) 1 hole; T Paterson (Leatherhead) and R Goudie (Epsom) bt J Robson (Orsett) and K Breeze (Warley Park) 3 and 2; T Marknock (S Winchester) and I Roper (Corhampton) bt D Griffiths and M Hooper (both W Herts) at 19th; J P and J E Langmead (both Hele Park) bt N Rowlands and L Herpin (both N Wales) 2 and 1; S Little and J Ambridge (both Moor Park) bt A Reynolds (Deal) and A Hall (Sandmartins) 1 hole; L Owens (R Dublin) and N Fox (Portmarnock) bt D Hawkins and R Bleall (both Wanstead) 3 and 1; T Wheels (Maylands) and R Joyce (W Essex) bt S Moon and I Howsson (both RAC) 1 hole; R Boxall (Trevose) and D Cooper (Birchwood) bt S Norman and M Dunsford (both Leatherhead) 6 and 4; M Side (Shirley Park) and D Clark (Richmond) bt J Doherty and N Harrington (Worthing) 7 and 6; C Tucker and S Mansell (both Meanings Heath) bt S Barwick and G Woodman (E Berkshire) at 19th; M Landsborough and A Smith (both R Ashdown Forest) bt P Carr (Sunningdale) and R Hodgkinson (Lindrick) 1 hole; S and K Andrew (Clitheroe) bt G Croxton and A Hare (both Cold Ashby) 2 and 1; W Dugdale (Sunningdale) and M Briggs (Stoke Poges) bt G Stewart (Real Club de Golf Sotogrande) and P Eales (R Lytham) 4 and 3; D Copsey (Coulsdon Manor) and J Edwards (Knole Park) bt A Frayne (St Mellion) and N Dougherty (Shaw Hill) 5 and 3; P Tupling and A McNabola (both Sandmoor) bt S Bolley and S Nightingale (Worthing) 5 and 4; W Bainbridge and V Alf (both Ealing) bt G Cowley and C Hudson (Army) 4 and 3; A Good and B Summerscales (both Foxhills) bt B White (Sutton Green) and D Osborne (W Hill) 23rd; B Tye (Burnley) and G Brown (Ganton) bt C Paxton-Lewis (McDonald's Ch'ship) and M Hughesdon (Sunningdale) 2 holes; S East (Moortown) and J Miller (Fulford) bt L Richardson (Worcester) and C George (Bramshott) 1 hole; M Pile (Woburn) and A Hodges (Sinchcombe Hill) bt J Jukes and T Dixon (both Wimbledon Common) 4 and 3; P Creamer (Chiddingfold) and C Cowper (J Nicklaus Centre) bt M King and J Nash (both Sunningdale) 3 and 2; K Smith and J Hay (both Waterlooville) bt M Howell and G Phillips (both Henley) 2 and 1; C Gane (Hazelwood) and N Reilly (Surbiton) bt K Maxwell and J Carr (both Sunningdale) 3 and 2; M Thompson (Canford Magna) and M Watson (Weymouth) bt T Stevens (Warrington) and J Lamb (W Wilts) at 19th; B McCall and S Shields (both Thorpe Hall) bt E Burleson-Rush and T Hilton (both E Sussex National) 1 hole; S Griffiths (Wentworth) and M Wilcox (unatt) bt B Lane and S Evans (both Bearwood Lakes) 2 and 1.

RACING: TEENAGE JOCKEY GIVES NICHOLLS HIS FIRST CHELTENHAM FESTIVAL SUCCESS

Tizzard proves equal to task

By Chris McGrath

TWELVE months ago Joe Tizzard's talent — long obvious to those who saw him as a boy, hunting in the Somerset hills — was radiantly confirmed to a broader public when he won the Christies Foxhunter Chase aboard Earthmover. However, some have wondered whether the teenage jockey is equal to the giddy rate of his promotion since.

There was, then, no escaping the sense that he had won more than the Guinness Arkle Trophy when Flagship Uberalles crossed the finishing line at Cheltenham yesterday. As he punched the air Tizzard, 19, was proclaiming a coming of age — just in time for his date with Double Thriller in the Tote Cheltenham Cup tomorrow. A first Festival success for Paul Nicholls, who shares the status of rising star in his own profession, was due reward for the trainer's faith in his stable jockey.

They had found the most resourceful of allies in Flagship Uberalles, whose performance — he took the lead two out, after the front runners had burnt themselves to a cinder — was redolent of his half-brother, Viking Flagship, who always battled so bravely up the same hill. "The fast-run race was always going to suit this horse," Nicholls said. "He really wants further. Joe was brilliant." Tizzard added: "We were flat to the boards the whole way, but he kept jumping well and galloping. I can't put the feeling into words."

A vivid vocabulary undoubtedly suggested itself to Jamie Osborne when taking a nasty fall with Kadou Nonantais, favourite for the William Hill National Hunt Chase. It was over the same Cheltenham fences that Osborne had shattered his left wrist 15 months ago, and for a while it seemed as though a grisly symmetry had maimed his right hand. Thankfully hospital X-rays revealed no break and he may yet ride Ask Tom in the Queen Mother Champion Chase today. Graham Bradley stands by to replace him.



HUGH ROUTLEDGE

Hors La Loi, ridden by McCoy, clears the last on his way to victory in the opening race

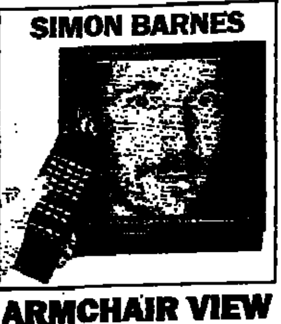
The class act on the supporting card is quoted 12-1 by Coral to dethrone Istabraq in the millennium Smurfit Champion Hurdle. Hors La Loi pulled 17 lengths clear in the opening Citroën Supreme Novices' Hurdle, ensuring that Martin Pipe and Tony McCoy resumed precisely where they left off last year. It was the winner's first start for the champion team after an expensive transfer from France and Paul Green, his new owner, said: "When Martin told me how much he would cost [in excess of £150,000] I felt ill and walked away."

Istabraq apart, Irish ambitions for the opening day were otherwise disappointed until Generosa won the last race, the Stakis Casinos Final. Her jockey, Norman Williamson, had already won the William Hill National Hunt Chase on Betty's Boy, providing trainer, Kim Bailey, with an upturn in fortunes. "That means a hell of a lot after the season I've had," Bailey said. "I owe huge thanks to the patience of my owners."

There was a nasty incident in the Kim Muir Fulke Walwyn Chase, but the five amateur riders who shared a pile-up walked away unscathed. A domino effect was triggered when Time Won't Wait lost his footing. The chaos cleared a path for Bruce Gibson on Celtic Giant, a first Festival winner for Len Lungo.

Meeting that warrants a high risk warning

SIMON BARNES



ARMCHAIR VIEW

The Cheltenham Festival is the most wonderful three days in the year, the rite of spring, the gathering of the clans, an annual pilgrimage, a three-day orgy of joy, the greatest — Oh shut-up about the Cheltenham Festival. This is one of those weird events that is either the most important three days of the year, or it hardly matters at all. Which is fair enough: but those that love it simply can't stop trying to convert everybody else to the true faith.

The television coverage is based on this principle. Channel 4 even ran a pre-Festival documentary, in which the most memorable part was played by the lady in charge of keeping the lavatories clean.

The fact is that not everybody is in thrall to the magic. There are those not interested at all, and there are those who take the robust view that the racing is all very fine and wonderful, but if they wanted Guinness spilt on their trousers, they are perfectly capable of doing so themselves in the privacy of their own homes.

Which leaves you with television: and the fact of the matter is that once Channel 4 stop telling us how bloody marvellous it all is — it is.

Any sport that dares to put the best against the best is likely to make wonderful television: and Cheltenham has horses as well. And adding to my personal pleasures, many of them I have had the honour of patting.

Not, alas, the day's hero, and the hero of the day's finest televised moment. They dared to show the run to the second-last flight in the Champion Hurdle from head-on. And what a head, too: the bright bay face of Istabraq, made unforgettable by the beautiful white gemstone marking.

A wave of horses bearing down on the breakwater of the hurdle. The huge French Holly (I've patted him), the grey colt City Hall (and him), and as I prepared a shout for the trainers who had received me so very kindly, so I fell silent and watched instead the triumph of beauty and class.

A head-on at such a stage in a Flat race would be meaningless, but in a jumping race it was perfect. For it was Istabraq that rose on the crest of the wave and surfed home, a champion becoming a double champion and who would bet against a treble.

The horse started at unbackably short odds. Before the race we had Istabraq's jockey Charlie Swan, an amiable man looking quite ill with tension — television, as ever saw beneath the bonhomous smile.

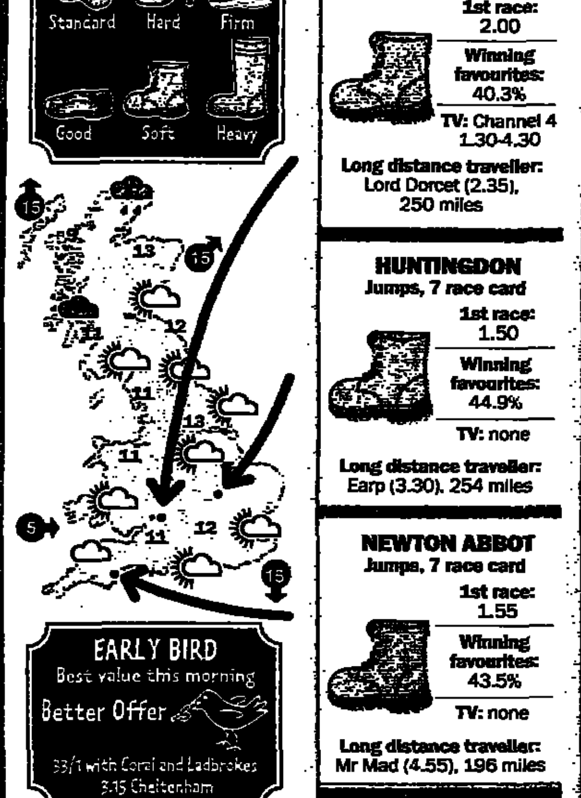
Afterwards, he looked like a man leaving the boat after an exceptionally rough channel crossing.

Swan's face told the real story about anticipation. Cheltenham is not a party, still less a pilgrimage. It is about very serious risk.

The risks are to pocket, to reputation, to limb, to life. Some of the last pictures of the day showed poor Jamie Osborne, the jockey, being taken to hospital after a truly horrid fall. I spoke to him on the telephone a week ago: a nice man who went seriously out of his way to oblige.

Risk. That is what Cheltenham is really all about. Two images that stay with you: a jockey with white face obscured by an oxygen mask: a bay-faced horse surfing head-on to glory, distinguished by a white gemstone.





HUNTINGDON

ROB WRIGHT

1.50 Real Fire. 2.20 Audacter. 2.55 High Mood. 3.30 Bartholomew Fair. 4.10 Seize The Day. 4.40 Trouble Ahead. 5.15 Gandegg Gavotte.

GOING: SOFT (GOOD TO SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

1.50 KEYSOE SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE
(£2,458: 2m 5f 110yd) (9 runners)

1 P2PP HELLO ME MAN 50 (F,G,S) B Llewellyn 11-11-12 Mr J L Llewellyn —
2 4335 HOTSPUR STREET 44 (B,G) E L James 7-11-5 Miss S Samworth (7) 82
3 052P COLWALL 22 (D,F) A Hobbs 8-11-3 Guy Lewis (3) 69
4 P602 REAL FIRE 15 (V,F) M Meagher 5-10-8 R Wilkinson (5) 80
5 0F/P BONITA BLAKENEY 65 G Balding 9-10-5 B Clifford —
6 5-00 DUNSTON HEATH 32 B Leavy 6-10-5 W Worthington 69
7 00-P ILLETS SPUR 222 D Geraghty 6-10-1 R Supple 37
8 65-P BAYLORD PRINCE 37 (B,F,S) Mrs J Ewer 11-10-0 Miss C Dyson 73
9 006F INCHYDONEY BOY 11 Miss Z Dawson 10-10-0 J Goldstein (3) [illegible]

9-4 Real Fire, 3-1 Hotspur Street, 4-1 Colwall, 6-1 Dunston Heath, 10-1 Hello Me Man, 12-1 Baylord Prince, 20-1 Illets Spur, Inchydoney Boy, 25-1 Bonita Blakeney

2.20 HITCHIN HAULAGE MAIDEN HURDLE
(£2,740: 2m 5f 110yd) (17)

1 606 ACCADEMIA 29 D Murray Smith 6-11-5 R Guest —
2 F404 AMERICAN STYLE 16 Mrs I McKie 7-11-5 S Curran 72
3 00P ANUGRAHA 89 J Norton 6-11-5 C Rafter (7) —
4 2FP2 ASHGAN 20 (B,G) I Williams 6-11-5 R Wakley 108
5 0-43 AUDACTER 19 L Wells 6-11-5 W Marston 87
6 -25P BURN OUT 27 (F) J Gifford 7-11-5 L Aspell 95
7 00P0 COOLAMILL 105 O Brennan 7-11-5 M Brennan 33
8 P EL JUBAIL 16 M Muggeridge 9-11-5 D Byrne —
9 PP GOOD SHOW 23 D Williams 9-11-5 B Clifford —
10 P HAVEYOUHEARD 82 G McCourt 5-11-5 D Fortt (3) —
11 00 JUST DESMOND 163F Miss C Caroe 5-11-5 C Webb —
12 6PPP MANNA BRAVE 19 A H Harvey 5-11-5 A S Smith 56
13 0-0P MOBAYE 81 J Neville 5-11-5 T Dascombe —
14 PP4 MORE FUN 28 M Banks 6-11-5 R Hobson (7) —
15 4045 POUNSLEY MILL 16 J Gifford 6-11-5 P Hide 78
16 365- PURE SWING 338 J Pearce 6-11-5 J Ryan 63
17 5-02 THE RED RECTOR 16 K Bailey 6-11-5 Edgar Byrne (7) 74

9-4 Audacter, 11-4 The Red Rector, 4-1 Ashgan, 8-1 American Style, Burn Out, 10-1 Pounsley Mill, 20-1 Coolamill, More Fun, 33-1 others.

2.55 ALCONBURY HANDICAP CHASE
(£2,478: 3m) (12)

1 /32- SHEELIN LAD 441 (CD,F,S) Mrs T McInnes Skinner 11-11-10 T Reed —
2 P2/5 ZAMBEZI SPIRIT 123 (D,F,G) Mrs M Jones 10-11-5 D Byrne 69
3 2500 DEBT OF HONOR 27 (B,F,G) R Lee 11-11-5 Mr P Costello (7) 106
4 /12P NO FIDDLING 33 (D,F,S) G McCourt 8-11-5 E Husband 92
5 4335 TROUVAILLE 53 (F) A Turnell 8-11-4 W Marston 92
6 FF33 TOM PINCH 27 (D,G) G Balding 10-10-10 B Clifford 103
7 43UP TITAN THAI 19 (F,S) N Mason 10-10-8 R Guest [illegible]
8 5243 HIGH MOOD 26 (G,S) T George 9-10-7 R Wakley 107
9 F-P3 WREN WARBLER 68 (S) Mrs P Robeson 9-10-7 A S Smith 103
10 355P JELALI 29 (G) D Murray Smith 6-10-6 S Kelly (5) 77
11 50P2 MOONLIGHTER 11 C Jackson 9-10-0 R Bellamy 91
12 16-P LEDBURIAN 14 (D,S) A Hobbs 9-10-0 T Dascombe —

4-1 Moonlighter, 5-1 Tom Pinch, 11-2 High Mood, 6-1 No Fiddling, 7-1 Wren Warbler, 8-1 Zambezi Spirit, 10-1 Sheelin Lad, Trouvaille, 16-1 others.

3.30 GETECH WINDOWS TERMINAL HANDICAP HURDLE (LADY RIDERS) (£2,332: 2m 110yd) (8)

1 -262 ALKA INTERNATIONAL 25 (D,S) Mrs P Townsley 7-12-0 Caroline Townsley (7) 97
2 211- BIGWHEEL BILL 569 (CD,F,G,S) J Jenkins 10-11-11 Kate Hills —
3 602P BARTHOLOMEW FAIR 23 (D,F,S) C Dwyer 8-11-8 Fiona Needham 92
4 P233 DISTANT STORM 25F (B,CD,G,S) B Llewellyn 6-11-3 Emily Jane Jones 97
5 6002 CAPTAIN BIGGLES 11 Miss A Stokell 7-10-8 Ann Stokell 99
6 5306 EARP 41 (B,D,S) F Murtagh 7-10-7 Pauline Robson 90
7 150 BAYYADI 146 (F) D Gandolfo 4-10-7 Sophie Mitchell 73
8 -00P DO BE WARE 9 (B,F,S) Mrs J Ewer 9-10-0 Clare Dyson 61

3-1 Distant Storm, 7-2 Bartholomew Fair, Captain Biggles, 4-1 Alka International, 6-1 Earp, 14-1 Bayyadi, 16-1 Bigwheel Bill, 50-1 Do Be Ware

4.10 THURLEIGH HANDICAP HURDLE
(£2,290: 3m 2f) (9)

1 5012 SEIZE THE DAY 11 (BF,C,G,S) M Coombe 11-12-0 Miss V Coombe 103
2 -P10 TILTY 56 (V,CD,F,G,S) A Streeter 9-11-12 Gary Lyons 104
3 /4-F WEE WINDY 23 (C,F,G,S) J Gifford 10-11-7 P Hide —
4 10/6 EALING COURT 95 (G,S) A Carroll 10-11-3 W Marston —
5 F14- THE MEXICANS GONE 310 (G,S) D Geraghty 11-10-13 R Supple [illegible]
6 /405 TIM 25 (C,F,S) J Jenkins 9-10-9 M Griffiths (5) 21
7 15F3 WHITEBONNET 11 (B,G,S) C Jackson 9-10-5 Miss S Jackson 125
8 0212 TYLO STEAMER 6 (V,S) D Williams 7-10-0 D Griffiths 97
9 0-26 GRUNGE 69 (BF,S) D Murray Smith 11-10-0 S Kelly (5) 55

3-1 Seize The Day, 4-1 Tylo Steamer, 5-1 Whitebonnet, Grunge, 7-1 Tilty, 8-1 The Mexicans Gone, 14-1 Wee Windy, Tim, 20-1 Ealing Court

4.40 BOLNHURST NOVICES CHASE
(£2,815: 2m 4f 110yd) (4)

1 212F NO MORE HASSLE 20 (CD,G,S) Mrs M Reveley 6-11-8 G Lee 92
2 /221 TROUBLE AHEAD 13 (S) K Bailey 8-11-8 R Wakley 122
3 0156 CIPRIANI QUEEN 23 (F,G,S) J Gifford 9-11-3 P Hide 90
4 5025 MURBERRY 203 (F,G) Mrs I McKie 9-10-11 S Curran 71

5-4 Trouble Ahead, 6-4 No More Hassle, 6-1 Cipriani Queen, 8-1 Murberry

5.15 SWINESHEAD STANDARD OPEN NATIONAL HUNT FLAT (£1,462: 2m 110yd) (13)

1 131 ITSONLYME 47 (D,S) Miss V Williams 6-12-0 S Kelly (5) [illegible]
2 P3- NATIVE DAWN 297P (BF) O Brennan 6-11-4 M Brennan —
3 0 VRAIMENT BLEU 48 J Spearing 5-11-4 W Marston 71
4 CLUB SANDWICH N Henderson 5-10-13 T C Murphy —
5 0-0 MINNHARNA 21 J Wharton 6-10-13 Michael Brennan 46
6 0 ROMANNI WAY 143 D Geraghty 5-10-13 R Supple —
7 IT WAS FOR NOTHING P S McEntee 4-10-10 G F Ryan (3) —
8 PORT OF CALL R Maxwell 4-10-10 W Worthington —
9 2 QUALITAIR SURVIVOR 28 T Etherington 4-10-10 L Cummins (3) 80
10 0 SO BE IT 48 Miss M Rowland 4-10-10 A S Smith 54
11 TOMOQUID Pat Mitchell 4-10-10 P Hide —
12 TUNNEL HILL LAD C Murdoch 4-10-10 S Wynne —
13 GANDEGG GAVOTTE D Gandolfo 4-10-5 Sophie Mitchell —

4-5 Itsonlyme, 3-1 Qualitair Survivor, 4-1 Club Sandwich, 16-1 Port of Call, 20-1 Tomoquid, 25-1 Gandegg Gavotte, 33-1 Native Dawn, Tunnel Hill Lad, 50-1 others.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: Miss V Williams, 3 winners from 8 runners, 37.5%; Mrs M Reveley, 13 from 37, 35.1%; N Henderson, 11 from 38, 28.9%; T George, 4 from 14, 28.6%; K Bailey, 17 from 84, 20.2%; J Spearing, 5 from 26, 19.2%.

JOCKEYS: G Lee, 5 winners from 13 rides, 37.6%; L Cummins, 4 from 16, 25.0%; P Hide, 12 from 56, 21.4%; Michael Brennan, 6 from 33, 18.2%; D Byrne, 6 from 34, 17.6%; M Brennan, 6 from 43, 14.0%.

NEWTON ABBOT

ROB WRIGHT

1.55 Calleva Star. 2.25 Blue Blazer. 3.05 Fleeting Mandate. 3.45 Hold Your Ranks. 4.20 Hasten Bak. 4.55 Rasta Man. 5.30 Charlie Chang.

Carl Evans: Flying Maria

GOING: SOFT SIS

1.55 A J BLACKLER RENAULT AND EXELL HANDICAP CHASE (£2,646: 3m 2f 110yd) (5 runners)

1 2F45 TRUE FORTUNE 8 (B,G,S) V Dartnall 9-11-10 R Widger (5)
2 F431 CALLEVA STAR 16 (G,S) R Alner 8-11-9 Mr J D Moore (7)
3 PU2P ROCKY PARK 15 (S) G Balding 13-11-7 F Keniry (7)
4 6-00 BRUSH OFF 22 Miss H Knight 6-10-0 R Farrant
5 6P-P COOL WEATHER 37 (B) N Hawke 11-10-0 J R Kavanagh

5-4 True Fortune, 7-4 Calleva Star, 7-2 Rocky Park, 20-1 Brush Off, 25-1 Cool Weather

2.25 LITTLE CLOSE HANDICAP HURDLE
(£2,697: 2m 6f) (7)

1 -032 BRIGHT FLAME 48 (D,S) Miss S Edwards 7-12-0 O Burrows (5)
2 61-P ACCOUNTANCY LADY 74 (G,S) M Pipe 9-11-11 G Supple (3)
3 0010 FALMOUTH BAY 47 (D,G,S) E L James 10-11-9 J R Kavanagh
4 0354 ELEGANT DES COSSES 11 (B,C,G,S) P Hobbs 7-10-12 R Widger (5)
5 0451 THE MINDER 9 (D,G,S) G Edwards 12-10-0 (6ex) D Salter
6 2622 BLUE BLAZER 6 (BF,CD,S) R Frost 9-10-0 T O'Connor (7)
7 1-5P LANDLORD 6 (B,D,G) Mrs J Hawkins 7-10-0 J Magee

7-4 Accountancy Lady, 11-4 Blue Blazer, 6-1 Elegant Des Cosses, 7-1 Falmouth Bay, The Minder, 12-1 Bright Flame, 16-1 Landlord.

3.05 HELEN CHALLACOMBE END OF FREEDOM MAIDEN CHASE (£2,362: 2m 110yd) (7)

1 P6-4 BENJI 284 G Enright 8-11-5 J R Kavanagh
2 2/UP FEVER PITCH 13 R Hodges 9-11-5 D O'Sullivan (7)
3 /2F4 FLEETING MANDATE 11 J S Moore 7-11-5 J Magee
4 P32P SPY DESSA 13 A Newcombe 11-11-5 D Salter
5 464P STEP IN LINE 68 (F,G) R Frost 7-11-5 J Frost
6 005F MILFORD WAY 13 T George 6-11-0 T Jenks
7 P/P- QUEENS CURATE 412 Mrs E Scott 12-11-0 S Burrough

5-4 Spy Dessa, 9-4 Fleeting Mandate, 9-2 Step In Line, 10-1 Milford Way, 16-1 Fever Pitch, 25-1 Benji, 33-1 Queens Curate.

3.45 HORSES FOR COURSES HANDICAP CHASE
(£2,788: 2m 5f 110yd) (7)

1 -U0P CEDAR SQUARE 65 (D,F,S) V Dartnall 8-11-10 R Widger (5)
2 PP0- MAPLE DANCER 313 (F,G,S) R Baker 13-11-8 G Shenkin (5)
3 -024 TIGHT FIST 88 (C,D,F,S) Miss H Knight 9-11-5 R Farrant
4 PP54 HOLD YOUR RANKS 42 (CD,S) R Frost 12-10-12 J Frost
5 2203 MELLING 20 (G) R Hodges 8-10-2 J R Kavanagh
6 U3P4 KOO'S PROMISE 14 (D,F,G) C Popham 8-10-2 O McPhail (5)
7 U442 ORIENTAL STYLE 15 (B) G Balding 5-10-0 F Keniry (7)

3-1 Tight Fist, 4-1 Cedar Square, Oriental Style, 9-2 Koo's Promise, 11-2 Melling, 6-1 Hold Your Ranks, 33-1 Maple Dancer.

4.20 A J BLACKLER PEUGEOT GENUINE PARTS MAIDEN HURDLE (£2,274: 2m 6f) (13)

1 P-5P BABY LANCASTER 42 M Griffin 8-11-4 R Widger (5)
2 BALLOT BOX L Snook 7-11-4 S Burrough
3 0P-P BOBBY VIOLET 71 A Juckes 7-11-4 R Farrant
4 355P BRONHALLOW 13 Mrs B Waring 6-11-4 E Byrne
5 000/ CYPHRATIS 715 D Wintle 8-11-4 J Mogford (7)
6 P1-0 DACELO 9 (F) H Howe 8-11-4 Mr P Flynn (7)
7 -203 HASTEN BAK 8 R Frost 6-11-4 J Frost
8 6540 L'IDEFIX 20 (G) T George 7-11-4 T Jenks
9 00P LABULA BAY 43 C Popham 5-11-4 O McPhail (5)
10 2000 NAKHAL 43 N Ayliffe 6-11-4 D O'Sullivan (7)
11 F4F0 PURPLE ACE 21 N Gaselee 7-11-4 J R Kavanagh
12 F4/P KICKLES LASS 147 S Cole G Shenkin (5)
13 65 BORDER TRADER 33 J S Moore 4-10-9 J Magee

5-4 Purple Ace, 11-4 L'Idefix, 5-1 Hasten Bak, 10-1 Nakhal, 12-1 Bronhallow, Border Trader, 20-1 Dacelo, 25-1 others.

4.55 TOTNES AND BRIDGETOWN NOVICES HUNTERS CHASE
(Amateurs: £1,446: 2m 5f 110yd) (14)

1 P-PF CONTRADICT 25P (S) Miss M Bragg 9-12-3 Miss S Gaisford (7)
2 2U-2 JUST BERT 39P (F,G,S) P Schofield 9-12-3 Mr P Schofield (3)
3 PPU5 JUST MAI-BEE 3P B Hurst 7-12-3 Mr P Flynn (7)
4 1P-P KING OF CAIRO 25P (S) Charles Smith 11-12-3 Mr W Smith (7)
5 0/32 MARCHING MARQUIS 13 (BF,F,S) G Brown 8-12-3 Mr T Gibney (3)
6 -353 MOSSIDE 25P (F) Miss D Cole 10-12-3 Mr J M Pritchard (3)
7 P-52 MR MAD 25P (V,S) Mrs D Hamer 11-12-3 Mr P Hamer (7)
8 P-P2 NO MORE NICE GUY 25P (G,S) D Turner 10-12-3 Mrs A Hand (7)
9 2-5F POOH STICK 167 R Frost 9-12-3 Mr A Holdsworth (5)
10 -U22 RASTA MAN 11P (F,G,S) J Heard 11-12-3 Mr K Heard (7)
11 P-FU SNOWSHILL SHAKER 2 (G) A P Knight 10-12-3 Mr C R Weaver (7)
12 00UU ALSKA 12 (S) P Southcombe 6-11-12 Miss W Southcombe (7)
13 F1-5 FLYING MARIA 13 (F,G) J S Papworth 8-11-12 Mr C Heard (7)
14 21-3 TICKET TO THE MOON 11P (BF,G,S) Mrs J Scott 9-11-12 Mr A Farrant

5-4 Marching Marquis, 9-2 Rasta Man, 7-1 Flying Maria, 8-1 Just Bert, 10-1 Mr Mad, Ticket To The Moon, 14-1 No More Nice Guy, 20-1 others.

5.30 COME GREYHOUND RACING AT NEWTON ABBOT HANDICAP HURDLE (£1,760: 2m 1f) (7)

1 0016 MR PERFECTA 32 (CD,F,S) R Frost 6-11-10 T O'Connor (7)
2 02P6 OPTIMISTIC THINKER 22 (S) T George 5-11-7 T Jenks
3 3446 ALMAPA 78 (D,F) R Hodges 7-11-3 D O'Sullivan (7)
4 3153 HIGH LOW 13 (CD,F,S) T Jones 11-11-2 J Mogford (7)
5 0011 CHARLIE CHANG 11 (B,D,S) B Llewellyn 6-11-1 O McPhail (5)
6 3421 STRETCHING 27 (D,S) A Juckes 6-10-8 Mark Smith (7)
7 0030 BROOKSIE 11 R Carson 4-10-0 M Ahern

2-1 Charlie Chang, 7-2 High Low, 9-2 Mr Perfecta, 6-1 Optimistic Thinker, Almapa, 12-1 Stretching, 16-1 Brooksie

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: D Wintle, 4 winners from 11 runners, 36.4%; P Hobbs, 46 from 161, 28.6%; M Pipe, 85 from 322, 26.4%; G Balding, 8 from 36, 22.2%; A Newcombe, 9 from 43, 20.9%; Miss H Knight, 3 from 18, 16.7%; R Frost, 24 from 225, 10.7%.

JOCKEYS: J Frost, 24 winners from 175 rides, 13.7%. Only qualifier.

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Cheltenham: 3.15 Archive Footage, Bakkar, 4.30 Slavica. Huntingdon: 3.30 Earp, 4.10 Tylo Steamer. Newton Abbot: 4.55 Mr Mad.

RESULTS FROM YESTERDAY'S THREE MEETINGS

Cheltenham

Going: good to soft (soft in places)

2.00 (2m 110yd hdle) 1, **HORS LA LOI III** (A P McCoy, 9-2); 2, **Joe Mac** (C O'Dwyer, 6-1); 3, **Arctic Fancy** (W Marston, 66-1); 4, **Colonel Yeager** (R Dunwoody, 10-1). ALSO RAN: 11-4 fav Cardinal Hill, 5 The Fly (pu), 20 Wither Or Which (5th), 25 All Gong, Auetaler, Prominent Profile, Ricardo (6th), 40 Hoh Invader, 50 Perfect Venue, Rathbawn Prince, 66 Brown Lad, Silence Reigns, 200 Carlys Quest, 250 Copper Shell, San Suru, Treasure Chest. 20 ran. 17l, 7l, nk, 9l, nk. M Pipe at Wellington. Tote: £4.20; £1.90, £2.80, £17.00. DF: £16.40. CSF: £23.96. Tricast: £1,421.56.

2.35 (2m ch) 1, **FLAGSHIP UBERALLES** (J Tizzard, 11-1); 2, **Tresor De Mai** (R Dunwoody, 14-1); 3, **Nipper Reed** (A Maguire, 10-1). ALSO RAN: 4 fav His Song (5th), 9-2 Makounji (pu), 5 Gris d'Estruval (4th), 6 Aghawadda Gold, Wynyard Knight, 16 Native-Darrig, 25 Cockney Lad (6th), 33 Advocat, 40 Feathered Leader (ur), 66 Gazalani, 250 Non Vintage. 14 ran. 2½l, 14l, 4l, 1l, 1¾l. P Nicholls at Shepton Mallet. Tote: £13.10; £3.40, £4.40, £2.30. DF: £85.80. CSF: £132.65. Tricast: £1,456.40.

3.15 (2m 110yd hdle) 1, **ISTABRAQ** (C F Swan, 4-9 fav); 2, **Theatreworld** (T P Treacy, 16-1); 3, **French Holly** (A Thornton, 11-2). ALSO RAN: 16 Lady Cricket, 33 Blowing Wind (bd), City Hall, Grey Shot, 40 Tiutchev (6th), Zafarabad (f), 50 Bellator, Midnight Legend, Nomadic (5th), 66 Upgrade, 100 Mister Morose (4th). 14 ran. 3½l, 2½l, 1l, 1¼l, 2l. A O'Brien in Ireland. Tote: £1.50; £1.20, £2.50, £1.80. DF: £7.50. Trifecta: £31.90. CSF: £7.42. Tricast: £22.08.

3.55 (3m 1f ch) 1, **BETTY'S BOY** (N Williamson, 25-1); 2, **Island Chief** (B Storey, 10-1); 3, **Nahthen Lad** (R Dunwoody, 25-1); 4, **Macgeorge** (A Maguire, 16-1). ALSO RAN: 4-1 fav Kadou Nonantais (f), 11-2 Step On Eyre (pu), 10 Random Harvest, Santa Concerto, 12 Calling Wild (f), Eulogy, 16 Earthmover (pu), King Lucifer (5th), 20 Jathib (6th), Unguided Missile, 33 Fine Thyne (pu), Tamarindo (pu), 50 Dom Samourai (pu), Shore Party (ref). 18 ran. 5l, 2l, 2½l, 4l, 2l. K Bailey at Upper Lambourn. Tote: £36.20; £4.70, £2.40, £3.10, £3.60. DF: £265.70. Trifecta: £5,345.20. CSF: £216.84. Tricast: £5,656.24.

4.30 (3m 1f ch) 1, **CELTIC GIANT** (Mr B Gibson, 20-1); 2, **Tell The Nipper** (Mr K O'Sullivan, 16-1); 3, **Orswell Lad** (Mr P Flynn, 25-1); 4, **Strong Tel** (Mr L Jefford, 33-1). ALSO RAN: 6 fav Linden's Lotto, 15-2 Scotton Green (6th), 8 Clinton (bd), 11 Wandering Light, 14 Shanagarry, Time For A Run, 16 All The Aces (pu), Cab On Target, Rightsaidfred (bd), 20 In Truth, Strong Chairman, 25 Carlingford Gale (ur), Elouis (f), Frazer Island (bd), Tremallt (f), 33 Noyan (5th), Stanmore (pu), Time Won't Wait (f). 22 ran. NR: Crabapple Hill, Torduff Express. 14l, 1½l, nk, 1½l, 4l. L Lungo at Carrutherstown. Tote: £23.70; £4.10, £3.00, £8.40, £13.60. DF: £161.30. CSF: £241.87. Tricast: £7,082.05.

5.05 (3m 2f hdle) 1, **GENEROSA** (N Williamson, 12-1); 2, **Melody Maid** (M A Fitzgerald, 12-1); 3, **Galant Moss** (A P McCoy, 3-1 fav); 4, **Shannon Gale** (F M Berry, 7-1). ALSO RAN: 15-2 Bosuns Mate, 10 Flying Gunner, 11 Three Farthings, 12 Kings Measure (pu), 14 The Butterwick Kid (ref to race), 16 Papo Kharisma, Pharanear, 25 Ebullient Equiname, Good Lord Murphy, Nocksky, Torboy (pu), 33 Jazz Track, Nibalda (5th), 50 Aboo Hom (pu), Allez Wijins, Harbour Island (pu), Jamaican Flight, Joliver, Sweet Glow (6th), 250 Chief Predator. 24 ran. 5l, 1¼l, 1l, 12l, 1½l. J Hassett in Ireland. Tote: £13.30; £2.70, £3.20, £1.70, £2.20. DF: £64.80. Trifecta: £671.30. CSF: £137.15. Tricast: £517.06.

Jackpot: not won (pool of £77,281.89 carried forward to Cheltenham today).

Placepot: £3,020.50.

Quadpot: £262.50.

Sedgefield

Going: soft

2.25 (3m 3f 110yd hdle) 1, **DOCKMASTER** (Richard Guest, 8-1); 2, **Kalasadi** (L Cooper, 9-2); 3, **D'Arblay Street** (B Harding, 9-2). ALSO RAN: 3 Topothenorthracing (6th), 12 Angus Airways, Corbleu, Mr Chrisbe (4th), 14 Saucy Nun (5th), William Of Orange, 16 German Legend, 20 Indian Viceroy, 50 Gold Drop, Over Stated. 13 ran. 9l, 20l, 5l, 6l, 2½l. Miss M Milligan at Middleham. Tote: £6.80; £2.30, £2.10, £1.80. DF: £24.30. CSF: £41.43. Tricast: £170.70.

3.00 (2m 5f ch) 1, **HEAVY HUSTLER** (C McCormack, 8-11 fav); 2, **Emperor's Magic** (Richard Guest, 9-1); 3, **Fryup Satellite** (Miss P Robson, 5-1). ALSO RAN: 6 Lord Rullah (4th), 12 Mr Bruno, 14 Charming Moss, Prime Style, 100 Quixall Crossett (5th). 8 ran. 5l, 1¼l, 13l, dist. J Howard Johnson at Crook. Tote: £1.50; £1.20, £1.60, £2.00. DF: £8.10. CSF: £8.59.

3.35 (2m 5f 110yd hdle) 1, **CATHEDRAL BELLE** (G Lee, 1-5 fav); 2, **Farrah's Darling** (Derek Byrne, 10-1); 3, **Penny Peppermint** (N Smith, 33-1). ALSO RAN: 10 Double Buck (4th), 16 Ella Falls, 20 Damaris, Heavenly Thought (6th), Ironside Princess, 33 Chantilly Rose (5th), 50 Icefire Dancer, 66 Ceeyayell, Woodford Again, 100 Cumbrian Kate, Gulie Point. 14 ran. 8l, dist, 1½l, 17l, dist. Mrs M Reveley at Saltburn. Tote: £1.40; £1.10, £1.70, £8.60. DF: £2.80. CSF: £3.46.

4.15 (2m 5f ch) 1, **RIVER UNSHION** (D Parker, 11-10 fav); 2, **Nosam** (Richard Guest, 7-2); 3, **Back Bar** (A C Coyle, 16-1). ALSO RAN: 11-2 Another Red, 8 Royal Mountbrowne, 10 Easby Joker, 16 Mr Fudge, 33 Copperhurst (4th). 8 ran. 10l, 28l, dist. J Howard Johnson at Crook. Tote: £2.30; £1.50, £1.50, £2.90. DF: £3.10. CSF: £5.69. Tricast: £36.94.

4.50 (3m 3f ch) 1, **TRADE DISPUTE** (Mr G Tuer, 5-4 fav); 2, **Hiltonstown Lass** (Mr R Walford, 3-1); 3, **Dromore Dream** (Mr G Markham, 14-1). ALSO RAN: 11-2 Unlathon (5th), 6 Makin Doo, 16 Fiscal Policy (4th), 20 Majic Rain, Polynth, [illegible] Boy (6th), 66 Crashballoo, Mischievous Andy, Murder Moss, Yornoangel, 100 Fast Study. 14 ran. 19l, 1l, 6l, 12l, dist. E Tuer. Tote: £2.00; £1.10, £2.20, £3.40. DF: £2.90. CSF: £4.98.

5.20 (2m 1f hdle) 1, **JARAAB** (B Harding, 8-1); 2, **Oriel Lad** (B Grattan, 6-1); 3, **Camden Fellow** (M Scales, 12-1). ALSO RAN: 4-1 Helmsley Flier, 9 Farceur du Mesnil, 6 Come And Run, 13 Konker, 7 Monis (6th), Mutasarrif, 10 The Lambton Worm (5th), 20 One Stop (4th), Panooras Lord. 12 ran. NR: Accystan. 7l, 1½l, 2½l, ¾l, 22l. Denys Smith at Bishop Auckland. Tote: £20.80; £4.60, £2.50, £1.40. DF 1st or 2nd with any other £33.00. CSF: £61.53. Tricast: £557.05.

Placepot: £17.20. Quadpot: £9.10.

Southwell

Going: standard

1.45 (1m) 1, **King Priam** (R Price, 10-1); 2, **Magical Shot** (3-1 fav); 3, **Torn** (20-1). 10 ran. 1¼l, sh hd. M Polglase. Tote: £10.40; £2.40, £1.60, £5.10. DF: £38.30. CSF: £37.66. Tricast: £585.75.

2.15 (7f) 1, **Nanny's Affair** (G Duffield, 11-8); 2, **Came Pooter** (evens fav); 3, **Abtaal** (14-1). 8 ran. 1½l, ¾l. M Prescott. Tote: £1.70; £1.10, £1.00, £2.30. DF: £1.60. CSF: £3.00.

2.50 (1m 6f) 1, **Katie's Cracker** (F Norton, 12-1); 2, **Hilzah** (4-1 jt-fav); 3, **Two On The Bridge** (10-1). 16 ran. NR: Monaco Gold. ¾l, 12l. M Quinn. Tote: £9.40; £3.60, £1.30, £3.60. DF: £24.90. CSF: £52.17.

3.25 (1m) 1, **Sharp Scotch** (R Fitzpatrick, 4-1); 2, **Mutahadeth** (6-1); 3, **Without Friends** (8-1). Saguaro (4th) 7-4 fav. 9 ran. 1½l, 3l. D Carroll. Tote: £4.40; £2.80, £1.80, £1.60. DF: £16.90. CSF: £29.15. Tricast: £178.34.

4.05 (1m 4f) 1, **Swift** (K Fallon, 11-2); 2, **Mr Fortywinks** (20-1); 3, **Noukari** (10-1). Green Bopper (4th) 13-8 fav. 7 ran. 1l, 7l. M Polglase. Tote: £7.10; £2.70, £6.40. DF: £22.40. CSF: £89.93.

4.40 (1m 3f) 1, **Danka** (M Fenton, 16-1); 2, **State Approval** (1-8 fav); 3, **Goldstar** (33-1). 5 ran. NR: Moonraking. 3l, 11l. K Comerford. Tote: £25.60; £3.60, £1.10. DF: £4.10. CSF: £18.04.

5.15 (5f) 1, **Nifty Norman** (Alex Greaves, 2-1 fav); 2, **Polar Mist** (16-1); 3, **Samwar** (14-1). 15 ran. NR: Bold Frontier. ½l, 1½l. D Nicholls. Tote: £2.70; £1.90, £6.40, £2.80. DF: £68.60. CSF: £36.98. Tricast: £370.57.

Placepot: £152.20. Quadpot: £28.80.

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: EASTER ROSS (3.15 Cheltenham)

Chris McGrath previews the Queen Mother Champion Chase

Knight has necessary armour

WITH every abdication there must be a succession. Though the echo of their lachrymose *applause will* barely have faded from the Cotswold amphitheatre where Jenny Pitman yesterday announced her retirement, today the Cheltenham Festival crowd may have the opportunity to salute another queen. They would notice a radical change of style, however, should Henrietta Knight saddle Edredon Bleu to win the Queen Mother Champion Chase.

Having said that, this relatively understated woman shares with Mrs Pitman so deep an emotional bond with her horses that she will limit her involvement to precisely



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that — saddling him before the race. *Then she will loiter by* the weighing room, as the thousands squeeze out of the paddock into the grandstand, *and await the return of Tony* McCoy, whose mien will reveal whether Edredon Bleu has been the spur to their roars.

"If I didn't need to put the tongue-strap on him I don't think I would even come to the racecourse," she *said* yesterday. "To come here is all one dreams of, but I will not be watching. I shall stay here, just like I did last year."

In the process she denied herself the chance to savour one of the most spectacular displays of jumping in front to have wrought Festival success during recent seasons. Edredon Bleu set a shattering gallop in the Grand Annual Chase, jumping with corresponding aggression, but nonetheless managed to sustain the tempo up the hill.

The French import has since risen to championship class via freewheeling wins at *Huntingdon in November* and Sandown last month, not to mention an unflinching effort in defeat when taken on for the lead at Sandown. Direct Route, who reopposes today, was able to pounce late there, but Knight hopes that Edredon Bleu can dictate terms unmolested on this occasion. *"If he meets the first* three fences right then he should have a bit of a run on the others," she said. "It'll be a case of catch-me-if-you-can. The ground is the key to his jumping, though, and it is still soft enough in places."

Knight is married to Terry Biddlecombe, wry but still passionate in his observation of Festival battles he once conducted with such bravura himself. "It's better than winning here as a jockey," he said. "You see all the work that goes into the day. It's more rewarding to be involved with the horses. If you have seven or eight other rides as a jockey, it can't mean as much. I hope he'll be spectacular tomorrow. He looks in great shape — he tries to bite the dog every morning."

Today, Edredon Bleu's venom must be preserved for his own kind, the likes of Call Equiname — the probable favourite. *Paul Nicholls* suspected that this fragile horse might offer him his best chance of breaking his Festival duck, and his confidence will scarcely be diminished by the way Flagship Uberalles proved him wrong yesterday *by triumphing in the Guinness* Arkle Trophy Chase.

The spring sunshine yesterday will have served the cause *not only of Edredon Bleu but* also Hill Society, for whose trainer, Noel Meade, Lady Luck keeps devising new *cruelties at Cheltenham.*

It will not have harmed the prospects of Direct Route either and his trainer, Howard Johnson, was in upbeat mood at Sedgefield yesterday after saddling two winners.

"*I have got him* [Direct Route] at his right weight, and I think he is as good as he was when he won the Tingle Creek *at Sandown,*" *Johnson said.* "By the law of averages if he is half a length down at the last tomorrow he will win. I don't care *what is in front of him.*"

TOBY MELVILLE



Call Equiname is likely to start favourite for the Queen Mother Champion Chase today



WEBSITE:
www.cheltenham.co.uk — dedicated site

TELEVISION:
The Afternoon Line (C4, 1.00pm); The Cheltenham Festival (C4, 1.30pm); The Cheltenham Festival (Highlights) (C4, 11.30pm)

THE TIMES CHELTENHAM HOTLINES:
09064 700547 — Racecall commentary
09064 700548 — Racecall results
*calls cost 60p per minute

THE BIG RACE FIELD

2.35 QUEEN MOTHER CHAMPION CHASE (Grade I: £97,600: 2m) (13 runners)

1 P116-4 **ASK TOM** 32 (BF,D,F,G,S) T Tate 10-12-0 ...... J Osborne 134
Owner: B Stewart-Brown — 8 wins from 18 starts, prize-money £145,242
Runner-up to Martha's Son two years ago, he suffered a setback before disappointing last year. Class act on his day and should be fitter for fourth to Celibate last month.

2 11/1-1 **CALL EQUINAME** 53 (CD,G,S) P Nicholls 9-12-0 ...... M A Fitzgerald 145
Owner: M Coburn — 10 wins from 16 starts, prize-money £64,219
Unbeaten in four starts over fences, he continued his rise through the ranks when winning the Victor Chandler Chase in January. Jumps well, open to improvement.

3 4-0231 **CELIBATE** 32 (CD,F,G,S) C Mann 8-12-0 ...... R Dunwoody 145
Owner: *Stamford Bridge Partnership* — *10 wins from 40 starts, £100,225*
Genuine and consistent performer who confirmed his wellbeing when beating Mulligan at Newbury last time out. Usually races to the fore and a bold showing is on the cards.

4 034102 **CUMBRIAN CHALLENGE** 39 (D,F,G,S)T Easterby 10-12-0 ...... L Wyer 142
Owner: Cumbrian Industrials — 15 wins from 56 starts, prize-money £126,597
Has in the past reserved his best for Wetherby, gaining ninth victory at that track when beating Direct Route (gave 21lb) in December. Something to find here.

5 1-2124 **DIRECT ROUTE** 25 (D,F,G,S) *J Howard Johnson 8-12-0* ...... N Williamson 124
Owner: C Heron — 13 wins from 28 starts, prize-money £169,333
Stamped himself amongst the top two-milers when winning at Sandown in December. Reportedly burst a blood vessel latest but would be a major player if back on song.

6 F-4121 **EDREDON BLEU** 39 (CD,F,G,S) Miss H Knight 7-12-0 ...... A P McCoy 135
Owner: J Lewis — 11 wins from 20 starts, prize-money £96,599
Front-runner who is very much on an upward curve. Won many friends when dismissing Mandys Mantino at Sandown last month and has first-rate credentials today.

7 6-2112 **GREEN GREEN DESERT** 67 (CD,F,G,S) P Nicholls 8-12-0 ...... J Tizzard 114
Owner: Mrs A Tincknell — 8 wins from 21 starts, prize-money £45,803
One-time monkey who has mended his ways for new connections this season, albeit that his two wins have been gained in lesser company. Plenty on at this level.

8 121463 **HILL SOCIETY** 18 (BF,D,G,S) N Meade (Ire) 7-12-0 ...... P Carberry 142
Owner: P Garvey — 7 wins from 24 starts, prize-money £78,294
Lost out by the narrowest of margins in the Arkle 12 months ago. Has run well in defeat *behind Dorans Pride and Direct Route this season, though others boast better credentials.*

9 2104-2 **KADASTROF** 18 (D,F,G,S) R Dickin 9-12-0 ...... A Thornton 140
Owner: A Paton — 11 wins from 40 starts, prize-money £86,542
Took very well to chasing last season when racking up six wins. Encouraging return behind Super Tactics at Kempton last month but needs to improve.

10 2-654P **LORD DORCET** 25 (D,F,G,S) J Charlton 9-12-0 ...... B Storey 148
Owner: J Hogg — 8 wins from 37 starts, prize-money £100,006
Ran the race of his life to finish third to One Man 12 months ago. Trained with this race in mind again this season, but has been disappointing and others make more appeal.

11 0P212 **MULLIGAN** 32 (D,F,G,S) D Nicholson 9-12-0 ...... A Maguire 137
Owner: Lady Harris — 9 wins from 34 starts, prize-money £87,261
Bounced back to his best when winning at Doncaster in January and lost nothing in defeat to Celibate at Newbury subsequently. This is much harder though.

12 36R30P **OR ROYAL** 32 (B,CD,F,G,S) M Pipe 8-12-0 ...... R Johnson 157
Owner: *D Johnson* — *6 wins from 26 starts, prize-money £178,025*
Leading novice who has become untrustworthy, refusing once this season and nearly repeating the trick again last time. Possesses ability but is best watched nowadays.

13 265141 **PAPILLON** 18 (C,D,S) T Walsh (Ire) 8-12-0 ...... R Walsh 100
Owner: Mrs J Maxwell Moran — 7 wins from 19 starts, prize-money £109,779
Versatile performer who boasts speed and stamina. Earned a crack at this when beating Opera Hat and Hill Society at Naas in February. This looks tough.

BETTING: Coral: 3-1 Call Equiname, Edredon Bleu, 4-1 Direct Route, 8-1 Hill Society, 11-1 Ask Tom, Celibate, 1[illegible]-1 Kadastrof, 16-1 Papillon, 25-1 Mulligan, 33-1 Or Royal, 50-1 Cumbrian Challenge, Green Green Desert, 66-1 Lord Dorcet.

Ladbrokes: 100-30 Call Equiname, Edredon Bleu, 9-2 Direct Route, 13-2 Hill Society, 7-1 Ask Tom, 10-1 Celibate, 16-1 Kadastrof, 20-1 Papillon, Mulligan, 33-1 Or Royal, 50-1 Cumbrian Challenge, Green Green Desert, 66-1 Lord Dorcet.

Tote: 5-2 Call Equiname, 3-1 Edredon Bleu, 11-2 Direct Route, 8-1 Hill Society, 9-1 Ask Tom, 10-1 Celibate, 16-1 Kadastrof, 20-1 Papillon, Mulligan, 33-1 Or Royal, 40-1 Cumbrian Challenge, 50-1 Green Green Desert, 66-1 Lord Dorcet.

William Hill: 11-4 Edredon Bleu, 3-1 Call Equiname, 9-2 Direct Route, 8-1 Hill Society, 10-1 Ask Tom, 11-1 Celibate, *16-1 Kadastrof, 20-1 Papillon, Mulligan, 33-1 Or Royal,* 40-1 Lord Dorcet, 50-1 Cumbrian Challenge, Green Green Desert.

1998: ONE MAN 10-12-0 B Harding (7-2) G Richards 8 ran

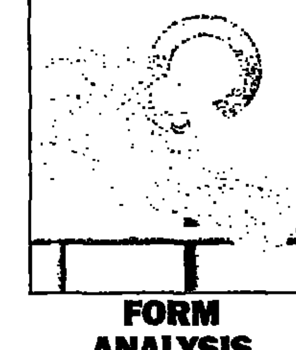
Hill Society can hit new peak

2.00: Barton, unbeaten in five starts over hurdles, has been all the rage in the ante-post betting. He has a high cruising speed, but whether he will have the *stamina to cope with the stiff* finish here has yet to be seen. **ALEXANDER BANQUET**, winner of the bumper here last year, is also unbeaten. He showed sufficient speed to beat Cardinal Hill (second when unseating rider two out in the Supreme Novices' yesterday) over two miles at Fairyhouse, and will be much better suited by this longer trip. The progressive **Goodtime George** and **King's Road** *look best of the rest.*

2.35: Edredon Bleu, Kadastrof, Celibate and **Mulligan** will make this a searching test from the start, and may set the race up for **HILL SOCIETY**. Beaten a short head by Champleve in the Arkle last year, Noel *Meade's gelding has been un*suited by soft ground of late, but should find the drying conditions here ideal. **Call Equiname** has had his share of problems, running just twice in the past two seasons. He put up a fine effort to win the Victor Chandler Chase on his reappearance, but *will find this much tougher.* **Direct Route** would be a threat to all judged on his comfortable defeat of Edredon Bleu in the Tingle Creek at Sandown, but broke a blood vessel when fourth to Teeton Mill at Ascot and has suffered an interrupted preparation since.

3.15: Most of these will have been trained with this race in mind all season, and it is fiercely competitive. **Ferbet Junior** and **Archive Footage** head a strong Irish challenge, but both have shown their best form over shorter and are doubtful stayers. **Easter Ross**, improving with each run, runs in the Queen Mother's colours, and victory for him would raise the roof. However, lack of experience could prove *his undoing.* **BAKKAR**, at 40-1, makes each-way appeal. A useful novice when trained by David Nicholson, he has been moved to Tim Easterby this season. He caught the eye making late headway over an inadequate trip at Sedgefield last time, and is capable of much better. **Gatflax**, who was sold for 200,000gns at the Doncaster Sales last October, did not take to fences on his first run this term, but showed that he retains ability when third to Kathryn's Pet at Doncaster and cannot be dismissed.

3.55: Nick Dundee, who was almost rerouted to the Gold Cup, will be a warm order in this company. He jumps well in the *main, but does make the odd* mistake and that will be put under scrutiny here. **Lord Of The River** was left clear by the last-fence fall of Marlborough at Ascot, coming home 15 lengths ahead of **Collier Bay**. He has claims, but **KING'S BANKER** makes more appeal. He looked a useful prospect when winning at Kempton and has plenty of



FORM ANALYSIS

scope for improvement given a greater test of stamina here. **House Captain** will go well if his jumping holds up, while **Brother Of Iris** has been impressive in lesser company and deserves this jump in class.

4.30: *Slavica spoilt her chance* with a blunder four out when third at Downpatrick last time, and is one of the few here likely to relish this four-mile slog. **Spot Thedifference**, a point-to-point winner, won a hunter chase with ease at Clonmel last month. He merits respect, but it is asking a *lot of a six-year-old to take this.* **Castle Red** is a thorough stayer, and ground his rivals into submission in heavy ground at Kelso last time. However, he may have to give best to the lightly-raced **DERRYMORE MIST**, who has been crying out for longer distances. He was far from disgraced when runner-up to Spendid here on his penultimate start, and will be staying on when others have cried enough.

5.05: French import **MAJADOU** had a plethora of Festival entries, and looks to have taken the softest option here. He could not have been more impressive in three starts since joining Martin Pipe, including a demolition of Kadou Nonantais over course and distance, and is difficult to *oppose.* **Listen Timmy**, who returned to form when winning at Newcastle last time, will make a bold bid from the front and rates a greater threat than **Hoh Express**, whose *stamina is far from* assured. **King Of Sparta** has his own ideas about the game, but has the ability to run well at a big price.

5.40: Golden Alpha, yet another fancied Pipe runner, made all the running when winning on his British debut at Newbury and will again go well. **Billywill** was disqualified after beating **Ingonish** by a short head at *Leopardstown and there should* again be little between the pair, while **Mestre Sala** overcame greenness to make a successful debut at Wincanton and is sure to improve. However, preference is for **ALEXANDER PRIZE**, the representative of Willie Mullins, who has won the past three renewals of this. He pulled 13 lengths clear of Malabar on his Navan debut and will surely go well.

ROB WRIGHT

CHELTENHAM

ROB WRIGHT

2.00 Alexander Banquet (nap) — 2.35 Hill Society — 3.15 Bakkar — 3.55 King's Banker — 4.30 Derrymore Mist — 5.05 Majadou — *5.40 Alexander Prize*

Timekeeper's top rating: 2.00 **BARTON.**

Our Irish correspondent: 2.00 Alexander Banquet. 2.35 Hill Society. 3.15 Khayrawani. 3.55 Nick Dundee. 4.30 Slavica. 5.40 Alexander Prize.

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) — TOTE JACKPOT MEETING — SIS

GUIDE TO OUR RACECARD

101 113143 GOOD TIMES 13 (BF,F,G,S) (Mrs D Robinson) B Hall 12-0 B West (7) 88

Racecard number. Six-figure form (F—fell, P—pulled up, U—unseated rider, B—brought down, S—slipped up, R—refused, D—disqualified). Horse's name. Days since last outing: F if flat. (B—blinkers, V—visor, H—hood, E—Eyeshield, C—course winner, D—distance winner, CD—course and distance winner, BF—beaten favourite in latest race). Going on which horse has won (F—firm, good to firm, hard, G—good, S—soft, good to soft, heavy). Owner in brackets. Trainer. Age and weight. Rider plus any allowance. Timekeeper's speed rating

2.00 ROYAL & SUNALLIANCE NOVICES HURDLE (C4)
(Grade I: £45,960: 2m 5f) (19 runners)

101 11-1111 ALEXANDER BANQUET 38 (G,S) W P Mullins (IRE) 6-11-7 ...... R Walsh —
(White, dark blue diamond and sleeves, white armlet, quartered cap)
102 1P-11 ARCTIC CAMPER 23 (CD,G,S) (Lady Harris) Miss V Williams 7-11-7 N Williamson 76
(Mauve and yellow check, yellow sleeves)
103 *01-F131 ARTADOIN LAD 12 (G,S) (J Stow) Mrs J Pitman 6-11-7 ...... M A Fitzgerald 118*
(White, black stars, white sleeves, black cap)
104 2-11111 BARTON 46 (G,S) (S Clarke) T Easterby 6-11-7 ...... L Wyer [illegible]
(Dark green and white stripes, black and white striped sleeves)
105 11-12U CARDINAL HILL 1 (BF,G,S) (J McManus) N Meade (IRE) 5-11-7 ...... —
(Emerald green and orange hooped, white cap)
106 35-1114 CASTLE OWEN 25 (D,G,S) (Lord Vestey) D Nicholson 7-11-7 ...... R Thornton 120
(Royal blue, white striped sleeves)
107 50-2211 GOODTIME GEORGE 47 (S) (Mrs M Bone) Mrs J Pitman 6-11-7 ... R Dunwoody 112
(Mauve, black stars, mauve cap)
108 2414 HEROS FATAL 14 (S) (F Farrant) M Pipe 5-11-7 ...... C F Swan 105
(Royal blue, red stars, sleeves and star on cap)
109 113-222 IRISH BANKER 25 (F,S) (D Jenks) M Pipe 8-11-7 ...... T J Murphy 113
(Brown, pink seams and cap)
110 11-1213 KING'S ROAD 25 (D,S) (Mrs N Jones) N Twiston-Davies 6-11-7 ... C Llewellyn 128
(Dark blue and white stripes on body, red and white hooped cap)
111 0 MAIDSTONE MAGNET 20 (F Wilson) M Pipe 5-11-7 ...... R Greene —
(Red, white star, black and red striped sleeves, white cap, black star)
112 022211 RASH REMARK 11 (D,S) (D Johnson) M Pipe 6-11-7 ...... A P McCoy 139
(Royal blue, emerald green sleeves, white cap, emerald green spots)
113 5-11532 TARA-BROGAN 26 (F,G) (P Kelly) I Williams 6-11-7 ...... S Durack 91
(Emerald green, white seams, white sleeves, emerald green armlets, yellow cap)
114 22114 WINDROSS 25 (S) (Mrs P Prowting) D Nicholson 7-11-7 ...... A Maguire 103
(Royal blue, yellow stars, yellow cap)
115 12-3413 WINSTON RUN 25 (G,S) (Mr & Mrs J Poynton) I Williams 7-11-7 ... G Tormey 94
(Black and yellow diamonds, checked sleeves, yellow cap)
116 013 WINTER GARDEN 38 (S) (S Mamara) N Meade (IRE) 5-11-7 ...... P Carberry —
(White, red sash, red cap, white diamonds)
117 01-1511 GLAZEAWAY 73 (S) (Mrs F O'Connor) M O'Connor (IRE) 6-11-2 ... C O'Dwyer —
(Black, red disc, black and grey striped cap)
118 1121 BEHRAJAN 25 (S) (Behrajan Partnership) H Daly 4-10-12 ...... R Johnson 130
(Yellow, purple and yellow striped sleeves)
119 541 NOUVEAU CHEVAL 20 (G) (Knight Hawks Partnership) M Pipe 4-10-7 J A McCarthy 96
(Brown and yellow stripes, yellow sleeves, brown armlets and diamond on yellow cap)

BETTING: 2-1 Barton, 4-1 Alexander Banquet, 5-1 Cardinal Hill, 6-1 Rash Remark, 7-1 Behrajan, 10-1 King's Road, 14-1 Arctic Camper, Goodtime George, 16-1 Artadoin Lad, 25-1 Castle Owen, Irish Banker, Windross, 33-1 Tara-Brogan, Winter Garden, Glazeaway, 50-1 Nouveau Cheval, 66-1 Heros Fatal, Winston Run, 100-1 Maidstone Magnet.

1998: FRENCH HOLLY 7-11-7 A Thornton (2-1 fav) F Murphy 18 ran

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS	Wins	Rnrs	%	JOCKEYS	Wins	Rnrs	%
Miss V Williams	10	28	35.7	A McCoy	41	162	25.3
W P Mullins	5	16	31.3	N Williamson	31	151	20.5
Mrs J Pitman	12	65	18.5	J Osborne	23	116	19.8
C Mann	6	34	17.6	R Dunwoody	26	164	15.9
O Sherwood	8	47	17.0	R Thornton	6	39	15.4
A Jarvis	3	19	15.8	A Maguire	17	114	14.9
M Pipe	43	278	15.5	P Carberry	4	31	12.9
F Murphy	3	21	14.3	M Fitzgerald	19	147	12.9

Williamson odds-on for Trophy

Norman Williamson is the 5-4 on favourite with William Hill, from 9-4, to win the London Clubs Trophy — awarded to the leading rider at the Cheltenham Festival. Williamson won the final two races yesterday aboard Betty's Boy and Generosa. The firm then bet: 6-4 A P McCoy, 14-1 C Swan, M Fitzgerald, R Dunwoody, 20-1 J Tizzard, 25-1 bar.

2.35 QUEEN MOTHER CHAMPION CHASE (C4)
(Grade I: £97,600: 2m) (13 runners)

SEE ABOVE FOR CARD AND COLOURS

3.15 *CORAL CUP HURDLE [SHOWCASE HANDICAP]* (C4)
(Grade III: £38,600: 2m 5f) (30 runners)

301 38/3544 CASTLE SWEEP 46 (G,S) (Lord Vestey) D Nicholson 8-11-10 ...... R Johnson 133
(Royal blue, white striped sleeves)
302 F21-300 RAINBOW FRONTIER 32 (S) (C Smith) M Pipe 5-11-5 ...... R Thornton 146
(Emerald green, yellow spots, halved sleeves, purple cap)
303 5-0051F ARCHIVE FOOTAGE 45 (V,S) (Dr M Smurfit) D Weld (IRE) 7-11-4 ... A P McCoy 117
(Yellow, royal blue epaulets, yellow cap, royal blue star)
304 6/213-6 KHAYRAWANI 117 (F,S) (J McManus) C Roche (IRE) 7-11-3 ...... F M Berry 138
(Emerald green and orange hooped, white cap)
305 F02-P1U RAINWATCH 32 (B,C,S) (Mrs A Farrant) M Pipe 5-11-3 ...... T J Murphy 139
(Royal blue, red stars, sleeves and star on cap)
306 3125202 POLAR PROSPECT 25 (G,S) (Mr & Mrs D Last & B Yates) P Hobbs 6-11-1 G Tormey 144
(Red and emerald green diamonds)
307 -404d30 CHALLENGER DU LUC 18 (B,D,F,G,S) (D Johnson) M Pipe 9-10-13 ... C Maude —
(Royal blue, emerald green sleeves, white cap, emerald green spots)
308 2135-03 GATFLAX 46 (G,S) (Dr J Hollowood) A Turnell 7-10-12 ...... A Dobbin 130
(Light blue and grey stripes, light blue sleeves, hooped cap)
309 01F1F11 FERBET JUNIOR 34 (S) (David Atwood) Mrs J Harrington (IRE) 8-10-10 J F Titley —
(Maroon and white hooped, maroon and black hooped cap)
310 26-0444 ALLEGATION 81 (V,C,G,S) (M Pipe Racing Club) M Pipe 9-10-9 ...... R Greene 146
(Black, white triple diamond, diabolo on sleeves, white cap)
311 102-101 EASTER ROSS 46 (F,G,S) (Queen Elizabeth) N Henderson 6-10-9 M A Fitzgerald 132
(Light blue, buff stripes, light blue sleeves, black cap, gold tassel)
312 -153111 KATES CHARM 14 (G,S) (Happy Band) R Alner 6-10-8 (7ex) ...... A Thornton 141
(White, red stars, red sleeves, white stars, red cap)
313 11P5060 DARAYDAN 46 (CD,F,G,S) (D Johnson) M Pipe 7-10-7 ...... R Hughes 131
(Royal blue, emerald green sleeves, white cap, emerald green spots)
314 3322211 ROBBO 25 (B,S) (Scarth Racing Partnership) Mrs M Reveley 5-10-6 Mr A Dempsey (3) 134
(Royal blue, white seams, armlets and cap)
315 2UFF-22 SUPREME LADY 109 (BF,D,G,S) Miss H Knight 8-10-6 ...... J Osborne 141
(White, black triple diamond, red sleeves, white cap, black diamond)
316 3-11112 KINGSMARK 14 (BF,D,S) (R Ogden) O Sherwood 6-10-5 ...... R Dunwoody 144
(Mauve and pink check, white sleeves)
317 1F-5P52 BETTER OFFER 26 (F,S) (Sir Eric Parker) Mrs A Perrett 7-10-5 ...... G Bradley 137
(Light blue, white cross belts, red cap)
318 -501131 SNOW DRAGON 41 (S) (Mirage Racing Syndicate) N Meade (IRE) 5-10-5 P Carberry 67
(Pink and light green chevrons, light green sleeves, pink cap, light green diamonds)
319 1P65235 DOM BELTRANO 18 (S) (C Wright) N Twiston-Davies 7-10-3 ...... C Llewellyn 138
(Light blue, pink and purple stripes, pink sleeves)
320 13-2501 GENEROSA 1 (C,G,S) (Mrs T Hyde) J Hassett (IRE) 6-10-10 (7ex) ... T P Treacy —
(Yellow, black sash, striped cap)
321 111-25P FADALKO 53 (S) (R Ogden) P Nicholls 6-10-3 ...... J Tizzard 116
(Mauve and pink check, white sleeves)
322 242-211 MASTER PILGRIM 23 (S) (Winning Line) Miss V Williams 7-10-3 N Williamson 137
(White, black seams, white and yellow halved sleeves, yellow cap)
323 1310P33 ELA AGAPI MOU 23 (B,D,F,G,S) (Action) G L Moore 6-10-2 ... M Batchelor (5) 137
(Dark blue, white star)
324 3-03300 FISHIN JOELLA 52 (B,S) (C Bailey) N Meade (IRE) 7-10-1 ... B J Geraghty (3) —
(White, royal blue stars, royal blue sleeves, quartered cap)
325 1034-64 DARAPOUR 45 (S) (J McManus) A P O'Brien (IRE) 5-10-0 ...... C F Swan 78
(Emerald green and orange hooped, white cap)
326 5-16035 BAKKAR 28 (V,G,S) (M Burke's 5th Family Settlement) T Easterby 5-10-0 L Wyer 148
(Emerald green and white diamonds, chevrons on sleeves)
327 5/0-2P3 MILTONFIELD 38 (S) (J Savage) J Mulhern (IRE) 10-10-0 ...... C O'Dwyer —
(Red, white sash, striped sleeves, hooped cap)
328 31128-3 FARFADET V 113 (G,S) (C, B & R Batterham) M Pipe 6-10-0 ...... D Gallagher —
(Emerald green and maroon (quartered), halved sleeves, emerald green cap)
329 21211R2 PHAR LESS HASSLE 25 (S) (Snipe Brighton) T McGovern 7-10-0 ... B Powell 138
(White, emerald green hoops, stars on sleeves, black cap)
330 -114533 BLUEDONIX 25 (G,S) (Mrs D Thompson) D Nicholson 6-10-0 ...... A Maguire [illegible]
(Pink, purple cross belts, hooped sleeves, purple cap)

Long handicap: Farfadet V 9-13, Phar Less Hassle 9-13, Bluedonix 9-12

BETTING: 7-1 Ferbet Junior, 8-1 Archive Footage, Easter Ross, 12-1 Darapour, 14-1 Generosa, Kates Charm, 16-1 Farfadet V, Master Pilgrim, Khayrawani, 20-1 Castle Sweep, Kingsmark, Robbo, Polar Prospect, Snow Dragon, 25-1 Rainbow Frontier, Supreme Lady, Fishin Joella, 33-1 Gatflax, Daraydan, Better Offer, 40-1 others.

1998: TOP CEES 8-10-0 B Fenton (11-1) Mrs J Ramsden 21 ran

3.55 ROYAL & SUNALLIANCE CHASE (C4)
(Grade I: £57,500: 3m 1f) (14 runners)

401 1U31P32 ARDENT SCOUT 6 (D,G,S) (R Mellish) Mrs S Smith 7-11-4 ...... S Durack 103
(White, black seams, mauve sleeves, mauve and white hooped cap)
402 05-2133 BILLINGSGATE 88 (BF,G,S) (Dr D Chesney) D Elsworth 7-11-4 ...... P Holley 124
(dark blue, yellow chevron, pink cap)
403 14-2111 BROTHER OF IRIS 47 (F,G,S) (M H G Systems Ltd) Mrs M Reveley 6-11-4 P Niven 135
(White, black chevrons, red and white striped sleeves and cap)
404 P-21212 COLLIER BAY 25 (S) (W Sturt) J Old 9-11-4 ...... T J Murphy 141
(Dark blue and white check, dark blue sleeves, white cap, dark blue star)
405 111142P EXECUTIVE KING 39 (S) (G Hubbard) G Hubbard 8-11-4 ...... A Thornton 128
(Emerald green, white sleeves, emerald green and white check cap)
406 /1-P1F1 HOUSE CAPTAIN 26 (G,S) (Mr & Mrs G Middlebrook) J FitzGerald 10-11-4 G Bradley 112
(Grey, royal blue seams, sleeves and cap)
407 33F2-21 KING'S BANKER 19 (G) (J Collins) N Henderson 8-11-4 ...... M A Fitzgerald 135
(Black, gold sleeves, red cap)
408 3-U2511 LOOKS LIKE TROUBLE 27 (G) (Universal Conference) N Chance 7-11-4 P Carberry 135
409 5-1P211 LORD OF THE RIVER 25 (G,S) (B Stewart-Brown) O Sherwood 7-11-4 J Osborne [illegible]
(Royal blue, pink epaulets, pink cap)
410 /1-U111 NICK DUNDEE 38 (S) (Mrs J Magnier) E O'Grady (IRE) 7-11-4 ... N Williamson —
(Dark blue)
411 6/24-4F OPTIMISM REIGNS 58 (S) (M & G Worcester) J Jefferson 8-11-4 ... G Tormey —
(Light blue, black sleeves, red seams, black and light blue quartered cap)
412 43-6122 SAMUEL WILDERSPIN 15 (BF,G,S) (S Smith) D Nicholson 7-11-4 ... R Johnson 104
(Red and dark green check, red cap)
413 1-11122 SPENDID 25 (CD,G,S) (Mrs S Catherwood) D Nicholson 7-11-4 ...... A Maguire 158
(Maroon, grey disc and armlets, quartered cap)
414 20-121P ARDRINA 43 (F,G,S) (L G M Racing) F Murphy 8-10-13 ...... A Dobbin 95
(Orange, emerald green cross belts, quartered cap)

BETTING: 5-4 Nick Dundee, 4-1 Lord Of The River, Spendid, 8-1 Brother Of Iris, 14-1 King's Banker, Looks Like Trouble, 20-1 Collier Bay, House Captain, 25-1 Billingsgate, Samuel Wilderspin, 33-1 others.

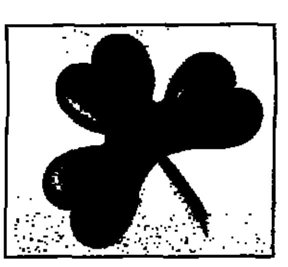
1998: FLORIDA PEARL 6-11-4 R Dunwoody (11-8 fav) W P Mullins (Ire) 10 ran

Bank on Mullins pair

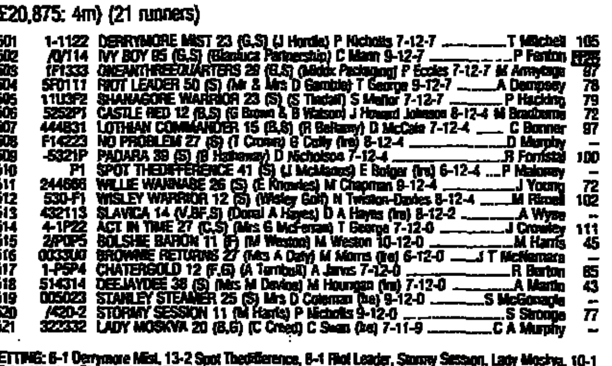
WILLIE MULLINS can provide Irish punters with plenty of cash to back his stable star, Florida Pearl, in the Gold Cup tomorrow by saddling a double at Cheltenham today.

His Alexander Banquet, who will appreciate the strong pace and step back up in distance, is the one to be on in the Royal & SunAlliance Hurdle while Alexander Prize can give him with a fourth successive triumph in the Weatherbys Champion Bumper.

Nick Dundee looks banker material in the Royal & SunAlliance Chase while Hill Society, with the drying ground in his favour, should go close for Noel Meade in the Queen Mother Champion Chase. Khayrawani, runner-up in the Coral Cup Hurdle last year, can go one better in this afternoon's renewal. The consistent Slavica gets the vote in the National Hunt Chase



IRISH VIEW

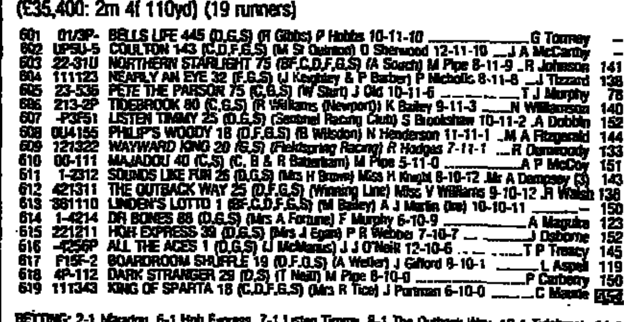


4.30 NATIONAL HUNT CHASE CHALLENGE CUP (AMATEUR RIDERS)
(£20,875: 4m) (21 runners)

501 1-1122 DERRYMORE MIST 23 (G,S) (J Hordle) P Nicholls 7-12-7 ...... T Mitchell 105
502 /0/114 IVY BOY 85 (G,S) (Blaslucz Partnership) C Mann 9-12-7 ...... P Fenton [illegible]
503 1F1333 ONEANTHREEQUARTERS 28 (G,S) (Middx Packaging) P Eccles 7-12-7 M Armytage 97
504 5F0111 RIOT LEADER 50 (S) (Mr & Mrs D Gamble) T George 9-12-7 ...... A Dempsey 78
505 11U3F2 SHANAGORE WARRIOR 23 (S) (S Tindall) S Mellor 7-12-7 ...... P Hacking 79
506 5252P1 CASTLE RED 12 (B,S) (G Brown & B Watson) J Howard Johnson 8-12-4 M Bradburne 72
507 444631 LOTHIAN COMMANDER 15 (B,S) (R Bellamy) D McCain 7-12-4 ...... C Bonner 97
508 F14223 NO PROBLEM 27 (S) (T Crosse) G Cully (Ire) 8-12-4 ...... D Murphy —
509 -5321P PADARA 39 (S) (B Hathaway) D Nicholson 7-12-4 ...... R Forristal 100
510 P1 SPOT THEDIFFERENCE 41 (S) (J McManus) E Bolger (Ire) 6-12-4 ... P Maloney —
511 244666 WILLIE WANNABE 26 (S) (E Knowles) M Chapman 9-12-4 ...... J Young 72
512 530-F1 WISLEY WARRIOR 12 (S) (Wisley Golf) N Twiston-Davies 8-12-4 ...... M Rimell 102
513 432113 SLAVICA 14 (V,BF,S) (Donal A Hayes) D A Hayes (Ire) 8-12-2 ...... A Wyse —
514 4-1P22 ACT IN TIME 27 (C,S) (Mrs G McFerran) T George 7-12-0 ...... J Crowley 111
515 2/P0P5 BOLSHIE BARON 11 (F) (M Weston) M Weston 10-12-0 ...... M Harris 45
516 0033U0 BROWNIE RETURNS 27 (Mrs A Daly) M Morris (Ire) 6-12-0 ... J T McNamara —
517 1-P5P4 CHATERGOLD 12 (F,G) (A Turnbull) A Jarvis 7-12-0 ...... R Barton 65
518 514314 DEEJAYDEE 38 (S) (Mrs M Devine) M Hourigan (Ire) 7-12-0 ...... A Martin 43
519 005023 STANLEY STEAMER 25 (S) Mrs D Coleman (Ire) 9-12-0 ...... S McGonagle —
520 /420-2 STORMY SESSION 11 (M Harris) P Nicholls 9-12-0 ...... S Stronge 77
521 322332 LADY MOSKVA 20 (B,G) (C Creed) C Swan (Ire) 7-11-9 ...... C A Murphy —

BETTING: 6-1 Derrymore Mist, 13-2 Spot Thedifference, 8-1 Riot Leader, Stormy Session, Lady Moskva, 10-1 Wisley Warrior, Slavica, Act In Time, Stanley Steamer, 14-1 others.

1998: WANDERING LIGHT 9-12-7 R Wakley (10-1) T Forster 24 ran



5.05 MILDMAY OF FLETE CHALLENGE CUP HANDICAP CHASE
(£35,400: 2m 4f 110yd) (19 runners)

601 01/3P- BELLS LIFE 445 (D,G,S) (R Gibbs) *P Hobbs 10-11-10* ...... G Tormey —
602 UP5U-5 COULTON 143 (C,D,F,G,S) (M St Quinton) O Sherwood 12-11-10 ... J A McCarthy —
603 22-31U NORTHERN STARLIGHT 75 (BF,C,D,F,G,S) (A Souch) M Pipe 8-11-9 ... R Johnson 141
604 111123 NEARLY AN EYE 32 (F,G,S) (J Keighley & P Barber) P Nicholls 8-11-8 ... J Tizzard 138
605 23-535 PETE THE PARSON 75 (C,G,S) (W Sturt) J Old 10-11-6 ...... T J Murphy 78
606 213-2P TIDEBROOK 80 (C,G,S) (R Williams (Newport)) K Bailey 9-11-3 ... N Williamson 140
607 -P3F51 LISTEN TIMMY 25 (D,G,S) (Sentinel Racing Club) S Brookshaw 10-11-2 A Dobbin 152
608 0U4155 PHILIP'S WOODY 18 (D,F,G,S) (B Wilsdon) N Henderson 11-11-1 ... M A Fitzgerald 144
609 121322 WAYWARD KING 20 (G,S) (Fieldspring Racing) R Hodges 7-11-1 ... R Dunwoody 133
610 00-111 MAJADOU 40 (C,S) (C, B & R Batterham) M Pipe 5-11-0 ...... A P McCoy 151
611 1-2312 SOUNDS LIKE FUN 26 (D,G,S) (Mrs H Brown) Miss H Knight 8-10-12 Mr A Dempsey (3) 143
612 421311 THE OUTBACK WAY 25 (D,F,G,S) (Winning Line) Miss V Williams 9-10-12 R Walsh 138
613 381110 LINDEN'S LOTTO 1 (BF,C,D,F,G,S) (M Bailey) A J Martin (Ire) 10-10-11 ...... — 150
614 1-4214 DR BONES 88 (D,G,S) (Mrs A Fortune) F Murphy 6-10-9 ...... A Maguire 123
615 221211 HOH EXPRESS 39 (D,G,S) (Mrs J Egan) P R Webber 7-10-7 ...... J Osborne 152
616 -4256P ALL THE ACES 1 (D,G,S) (J McManus) J J O'Neill 12-10-6 ...... T P Treacy 145
617 F15F-2 BOARDROOM SHUFFLE 19 (D,F,G,S) (A Weller) J Gifford 8-10-1 ...... L Aspell 119
618 4P-112 DARK STRANGER 29 (D,S) (T Neill) M Pipe 8-10-0 ...... P Carberry 150
619 111343 KING OF SPARTA 18 (C,D,F,G,S) (Mrs R Tice) J Portman 6-10-0 ...... C Maude [illegible]

BETTING: 2-1 Majadou, 6-1 Hoh Express, 7-1 Listen Timmy, 8-1 The Outback Way, 10-1 Tidebrook, 14-1 *Nearly An Eye, Dr Bones, Linden's Lotto, Northern Starlight,* 20-1 others.

1998: SUPER COIN 10-10-0 *N* Williamson (7-1) R Lee 14 ran

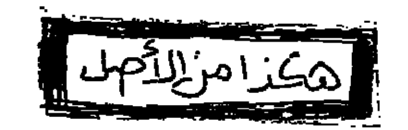


5.40 WEATHERBYS CHAMPION BUMPER *(STANDARD OPEN NH FLAT)*
(Grade I: £17,800: 2m 110yd) (25 runners)

1 313 ABALVINO 37 (BF,D,S) (M S Racing) P R Webber 5-11-6 ...... J A McCarthy 86
2 1 ALEXANDER PRIZE 24 (D,S) (Mrs N O'Callaghan) W P Mullins (Ire) 6-11-6 ... R Walsh —
3 123 BACCARAT 18 (BF,D,G) (Lady Lloyd Webber) J FitzGerald 5-11-6 ...... L Wyer 93
4 16 BEHAMORE 122 (BF,D,S) (Mrs J Bishop) R Rowe 6-11-6 ...... C F Swan 73
5 21-1 BILVERDIN 31 (D,S) (A McLean) Miss S Collins (Ire) 5-11-6 ...... Mr P Fenton —
6 21101 BILLYWILL 78 (BF,D,S) (Cats & Mice Syndicate) C Roche (Ire) 5-11-6 Mr P Maloney (3) —
7 12 CANASTA 25 (BF,D,S) (Southern Brick & Tile Co Ltd) M Pitman 5-11-6 L Corcoran (7) 96
8 4-5 CONSPIRITO 25 (R Hitchins) Mrs J Pitman 6-11-6 ...... A Thornton 82
9 121 FROSTY CANYON 26 (D,S) (Mrs P Sherwood) P R Webber 6-11-6 ...... J Osborne [illegible]
10 1-1 GOLDEN ALPHA 32 (D,G,S) *(D Johnson)* M Pipe 5-11-6 ...... A P McCoy [illegible]
11 11 INGONISH 78 (D,S) (Mrs M Watt) N Meade (Ire) 6-11-6 ...... P Carberry —
12 1 MATT HOLLAND 107 (D,S) (Whitehall Racing) Mrs L Wadham 8-11-6 ... A Maguire 85
13 134 MONSIGNOR 32 (D,S) (M Denmark) M Pitman 5-11-6 ...... B Powell 101
14 10 MYSILVERRIVERFEALE 49 (BF,D,S) (Silver Feale Syn.) P Ryan (Ire) 5-11-6 J R Barry —
15 2-512 NO FORECAST 32 (S) (Uplands Bloodstock) S Sherwood 5-11-6 ...... D Gallagher 92
16 131 QUEENS HARBOUR 11 (D,S) (P Mellon) *Mrs J Pitman 5-11-6* ...... *D Leahy* 108
17 151 SCARLET EMPEROR 18 (CD,G,S) (R Hitchins) Mrs J Pitman 5-11-6 R Dunwoody 101
18 11 TOGGI DANCER 25 (D,S) (Ashleybank Investments) N Richards 6-11-6 ... A Dobbin 102
19 2021- VANILLA MAN 27 (S) (Mrs P Dillon) P Mullins (Ire) 6-11-6 ...... C O'Dwyer —
20 111 BALLET-K 21 (D,F,G,S) (Gallagher Enterprises Ltd) J Neville 5-11-1 ... N Williamson 95
21 36 GULSHAN 23 (Mrs J Powell) N Twiston-Davies 5-11-1 ...... C Llewellyn 67
22 4 ALL ANTRIM 67 (J Savage) J Mulhern (Ire) 4-10-12 ...... Mrs C Barker —
23 21 BARNEY KNOWS 47 (D,S) (C Barnes) M Pett 4-10-12 ...... F Leahy 86
24 143 ENBORNE 9 (BF,D,S) (Triple G DA Racing Syndicate) D Barker 4-10-12 ... G Bradley 93
25 1 MESTRE SALA 20 (D,S) (Mrs Stretton) H Daly 4-10-12 ...... R Johnson 99

BETTING: 7-2 Alexander Prize, 4-1 Golden Alpha, 6-1 Bilverdin, 12-1 Mestre Sala, Billywill, Ingonish, 16-1 *Scarlet Emperor, 20-1 Barney Knows, Frosty Canyon, Toggi Dancer,* 25-1 others.

1998: ALEXANDER BANQUET 5-11-6 *Mr R Walsh* (9-1) W P Mullins (Ire) 25 ran



FOOTBALL

Celtic pair set to cash in with Wednesday deal

By Phil Gordon and Stephen Wood

PHIL O'DONNELL and Simon Donnelly will quadruple their salaries when they complete their moves from Celtic to Sheffield Wednesday. The players, both available on free transfers under the Bosman ruling, have signed pre-contract agreements for next season, although Wednesday said yesterday that they have not yet given up hope of recruiting them earlier.

"We've come to an agreement with both players and they will join us in the summer, if not before," Danny Wilson, the Wednesday manager, said. He has offered a nominal fee to enable the midfield players to move to Hillsborough before the transfer deadline.

"We're still talking with Celtic and if something happens, then great," Wilson said. "If it doesn't happen and we can't force the issue, then we will sign them before the start of next season. If we can get them before then it will be a big boost, but they will be a boost to the squad anyway because it adds competition for places, which is what we have been trying to do."

If Celtic are left out of pocket it will mirror the situation when John Collins took advantage of the Bosman ruling by joining AS Monaco in 1996. Uefa, the European governing body, subsequently ruled against Celtic's £3 million compensation claim, although the market value of O'Donnell and Donnelly would only match that sum combined.

Celtic's stringent pay policy for domestic players meant that Donnelly and O'Donnell, like Collins, decided that their futures lay away from Celtic Park. Donnelly, 24, who was in the Scotland squad at the World Cup finals last summer, scored 16 goals last season as Celtic won the championship, yet he was one of the poorest-paid players in the first-team squad.

While foreign recruits — including Regi Blinker, the Holland winger, who joined from Wednesday — were kept on the bench by Donnelly's form, they earned three times as much as he did. Donnelly and O'Donnell can expect to earn £3 million each during their four-year contracts with the FA Carling Premiership club.

O'Donnell, 26, was Celtic's record transfer when he moved from Motherwell in 1994 for £1.75 million and while his time at the club has been blighted by injury he will be leaving after probably his most consistent season.

"Wednesday offered us the security that Celtic didn't but I am disappointed that Celtic didn't go to any great extremes to keep us," O'Donnell said. "Both my contract and Simon's expired in four months and while Celtic made us an initial offer some time ago, which was not difficult to reject, they had a long time to resolve the situation.

"I could not hold on for ever for Celtic. They were my preferred option if the deal was right, but there had been no contact within the last eight weeks. Sheffield Wednesday, however, were very impressive, as was the manager."

Wilson, however, is facing disappointment in his attempt to bring Michael Mols, the Utrecht striker, to Hillsborough. The deal appeared to be finalised before Rangers, leaders of the Scottish Premier League, showed an interest and Mols has admitted that Rangers are now the favourites to secure his services.

Wilson insisted that the acquisitions of O'Donnell and Donnelly were not a knee-jerk reaction to his failure to tempt Mols to the club. "The two Celtic lads would have joined us whatever happened," he said. "They can play in a number of positions across midfield and up front and, because they've played regularly for Celtic in Europe, they have tremendous experience. They are fresh faces and will add some competition to the squad."

Wednesday are still interested in strengthening their squad before the transfer deadline on March 25. Chris Waddle, the former Wednesday player, is believed to have watched Pascual Numa, a striker with RC Lens, the French champions, on their behalf.



Donnelly: banking on move O'Donnell: consistent

Discarded Hoddle still feels the pain

GLENN HODDLE has still to come to terms with his sacking as England coach, six weeks after being relieved of his duties over his comments on reincarnation and the disabled.

"I pinch myself sometimes and think I should still be going into the office and be preparing for the game against France," Hoddle tells *The Lion's Den*, a documentary on the England job to be broadcast on BBC 1 a week today.

"Every now and again it hits you. If we'd lost three games on the trot and I got the sack, *c'est la vie*. But that's not the case and that's what is so sad."

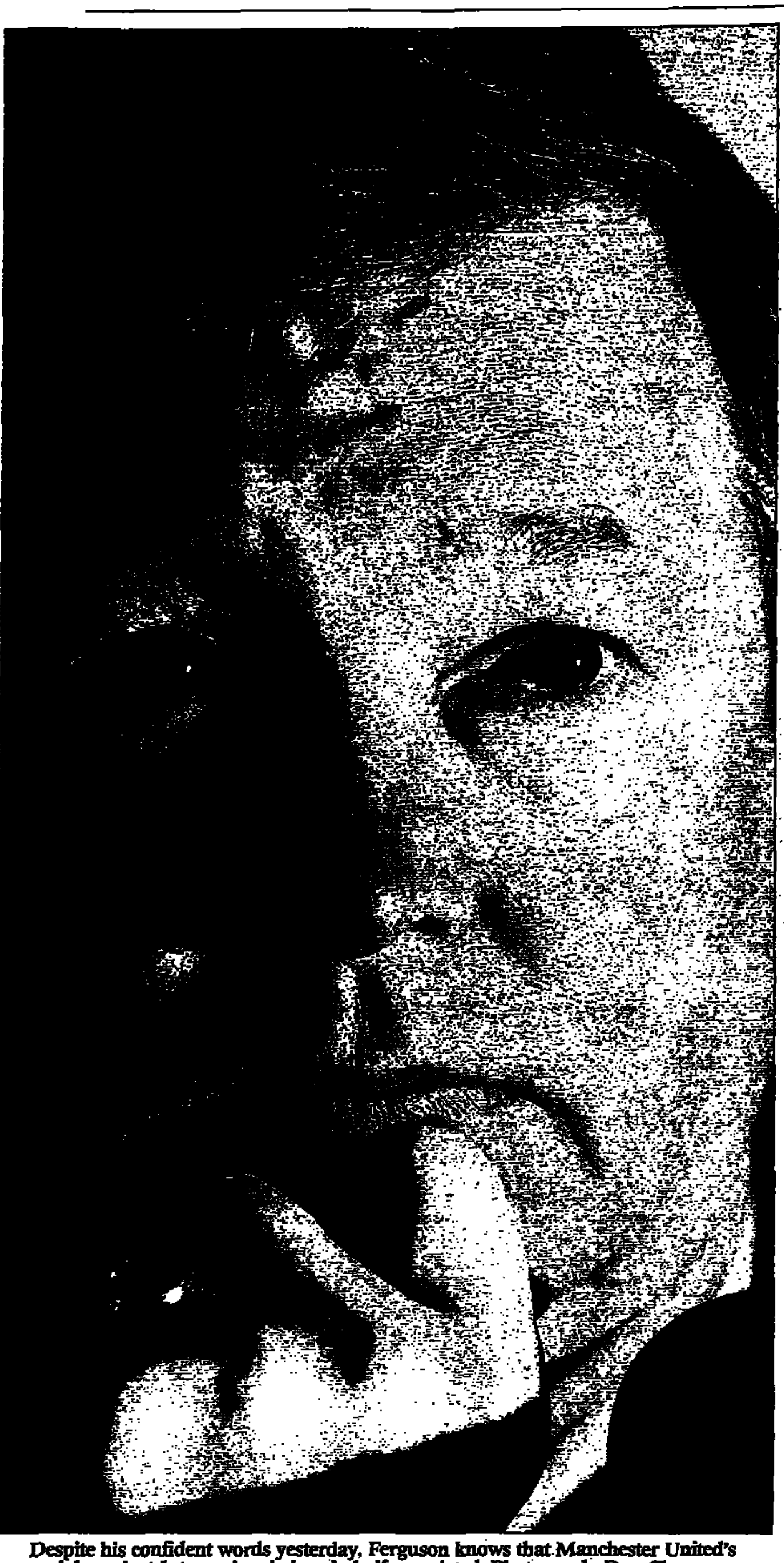
Hoddle, 40, still believes that his comments, reported in an interview with *The Times*, were misinterpreted. He said: "I must get people to understand that what I was actually given the sack for — the punishment for disabled people from other lifetimes — is not my belief and it's not what I said."

Hoddle also admitted that "negative publicity" given to his relationship with David Beckham must have affected the Manchester United midfield player.

"I've seen it from the players' perspective and it obviously has an adverse effect on them," Hoddle said. "I spoke about David and how well he had coped and acquitted himself since the World Cup. The next day's headline was "Hoddle blasts Beckham" — the total opposite of what I was saying. You can't tell me that wouldn't affect David."

Ronaldo's return haunts United

From Oliver Holt, Football Correspondent in Milan



Despite his confident words yesterday, Ferguson knows that Manchester United's job against Internazionale is only half-completed. Photograph: Dan Chung

THE assistant in the club shop at the San Siro was peering outthrough the concrete tunnel to see the green of the pitch, the brilliant white of the net and the giant shadow cast by the Curva Sud. He was holding a pile of blue and black shirts, newly embellished with the names of Ronaldo and Baggio. He began to laugh as he stared out at the arena. "Beautiful stadium," he said, "but a shame about Inter."

Less than a mile away, at the Manchester United team hotel, Alex Ferguson was not treating the Italians with quite the same disdain, even though the Internazionale squad was riven with more dissent yesterday when Paulo Sousa was banished for questioning the ability of Mircea Lucescu, the coach.

Ferguson sidestepped indignant questions about his views on Inter's propensity for dirty tricks. The United manager suggested, in fact, that should they hold off Inter here tonight, it would give them the confidence to win the European Cup. If they protect the 2-0 lead that they built in the first leg of this quarter-final at Old Trafford, if they prove to themselves that they are worldly wise enough to dispose of an Italian side at this stage of the competition, then the trophy that they have chased for more than 30 years will be within reach.

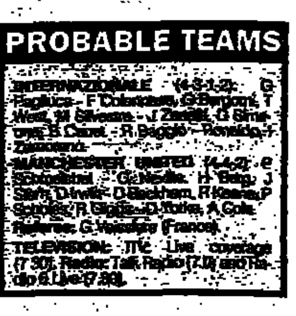
"We are in a knockout situation now," Ferguson said. "It is sudden death and the value of away goals is vital. So we have done one part well and I hope we do the next part even better. If we score tomorrow night — and I think we will — then we will go through.

"I think my players know that if they get by this tie they can win the whole thing. I think this is the hardest one for us. It is a good incentive for us. Italian sides are the barometer of success in Europe. They have been for the last decade. If you can knock an Italian team out of Europe you are taking a giant stride forward."

If United do allow their lead to be wiped out it will be a devastating blow. This Inter side is there for the taking, terribly vulnerable in defence and uncertain going forward. They are looking to Ronaldo to inspire them, but he is only half-fit. Time and again on Saturday, Inter were split wide open by the marauding AC Milan attack as they stumbled to a 2-2 draw that left them languishing in eighth place in Serie A.

They looked particularly fragile on the left, where the replacement of Aron Winter by Mickael Silvestre has done nothing to suggest that David Beckham will not have another field day supplying ammunition for Dwight Yorke and Andy Cole. If United score, Inter will have to get four to go through, and this side is not capable of that.

The one lingering cause for concern is the spectre of Ronaldo. The Brazil striker has been rushed back from a knee injury and played fitfully and tentatively in the Milan derby before being taken off at half-time. There is still an aura about him, though, that might unnerve United. Even in his reduced state he is capable of the flash of inspiration — the turn and shot, the flick or the pass — that might drag Inter back into the tie.



PROBABLE TEAMS

"Ronaldo is back now," Ferguson said. "They have been preparing him for this game and we expect him to play. For how long he plays is another question, but we will not be making any special plans for him. He is the best player in the world at the moment, along with Zinedine Zidane, and he can represent a threat to anyone when he is in top form. We will just have to hope that we can handle him and handle him well."

Ferguson finished by saying that he envied Inter the wealth of European experience amassed by men such as Roberto Baggio and Giuseppe Bergomi, the sweeper who has played in more European ties than any other player. Amid the statistics, though, one other stands out. If Peter Schmeichel keeps a clean sheet tonight, his 176th, it would surpass the United club record held by Alex Stepney. It would also mean his team are through to the semi-finals of the European Cup.

Inter ....3 Liverpool 0
(Inter win 4-3 on aggregate)
European Cup semi-final (1965).

After a night of high drama and emotion at Anfield, Liverpool had defeated Inter, the holders, 3-1 and looked well set to to become the first British side to reach the European Cup final. However they reckoned without the fanaticism of the San Siro crowd and the compliant nature of visiting referees in Italy at that time. Encouraged by the Italian press to crank up the volume "even better than the Beatles" a 90,000 crowd provided an atmosphere that intimidated Liverpool. Ortiz de Mendibil, the Spanish referee, allowed a goal to stand straight from what Liverpool believed was an indirect free kick then did nothing as Piero kicked the ball out of Tommy Lawrence's hands for the second. By the time Fachetti added a third in the second half, Liverpool were beaten and Inter went on to retain the trophy.

Inter ....3 Aston Villa 0
(Inter win 3-2 on aggregate)
Uefa Cup, second round, 1990

At Villa Park, Germany's World Cup-winning captain, Lothar Matthaus, was man-marked out of the game by Paul Birch, Tony Daley ran the Inter defence ragged and Villa won 2-0 with goals by Kent Nielsen and the outstanding David Platt. Crucially, though, Villa missed several opportunities to secure an even bigger lead and it was all very different on a terrible pitch two weeks later in Milan. Tony Cascarino missed a comfortable chance to score an away goal and Villa were overwhelmed. Jürgen Klinsmann pulled one back early on, Nicola Berti levelled the aggregate scores after an hour and Alessandro Bianchi scored a slightly dubious third before the end. "Even if it had been disallowed they would still have scored another," a sorrowful Platt admitted.

RICHARD WHITEHEAD

York City dismiss Little in attempt to stop the rot

■ ALAN LITTLE has been dismissed as manager of York City, ending his 11-season spell at Bootham Crescent. The decision was taken at a board meeting on Monday night, with York City lying nineteenth in the Nationwide League second division, two points above the relegation zone.

Little was appointed manager in March 1993 after serving as assistant to both John Bird and John Ward. Keith Usher, the secretary, said: "Action was felt necessary after our recent run." Neil Thompson, the player-coach, has been named as caretaker manager.

■ Martin Allen, the Portsmouth reserve team coach, was dismissed by administrators running the club yesterday after a private disciplinary hearing. The action came after allegations of gross misconduct at the first division club's training ground. A complaint was made to the club by a woman over remarks allegedly made by Allen. Allen, 33, denies the allegations. He has consulted lawyers acting for the Professional Footballers' Association and says he intends to appeal.

■ Peter Ridsdale, the chairman of Leeds United, and David O'Leary, the manager, both have denied that they are trying to sign Pierre van Hooijdonk from Nottingham Forest. Van Hooijdonk has again been linked with a £4 million move to Elland Road. However, O'Leary said: "We have not been in touch with anyone at Forest because he is not one of the players I want to bring to this club."

IN BRIEF

■ Arsène Wenger, the Arsenal manager, has added another teenager to his squad. Moritz Volz, 16, a Germany youth international, has been signed from Schalke 04, of the Bundesliga.

■ England's European championship qualifying match against Poland at Wembley on March 27 will be refereed by Vitor Melo Pereira, of Portugal. Pereira, 41, was in charge of both the Group H match between Jamaica and Croatia and the second-round tie between Germany and Mexico at the World Cup last year.



Little: dismissed by York

■ Guy Whittingham, the Sheffield Wednesday forward, could move to Manchester City on a permanent basis. Whittingham, 34, who has ended a loan spell at Portsmouth, also has the option of joining Watford until the end of the season.

■ Robert Lee has asked Newcastle United to lower their £2 million valuation of him. Interest from Southampton, West Ham United and Charlton Athletic has been curbed by the size of the fee.

■ Hernan Crespo and Enrico Chiesa each scored twice as Parma beat Bordeaux 6-0 to secure a place in the Uefa Cup semi-finals last night. Bordeaux had won the first leg 2-1 at home.

Gould banks on Hartson to help Wales bridge gap

By Our Sports Staff

JOHN HARTSON, the Wimbledon striker, has been recalled by Bobby Gould, the Wales manager, for the European championship qualifying match against Switzerland in Zurich on March 31. Victory could put Wales on the brink of a play-off place in their attempt to reach the finals in Holland and Belgium next summer. They have not been in such an exulted position since they reached the 1958 World Cup finals in Sweden.

Hartson has not played for his country since last summer when Gould, among others, criticised him for being overweight. Injuries ruled him out of all three of the group matches played by Wales earlier this season, before his suspension after a training-ground incident with Eyal Berkovic, his former West Ham United team-mate, and his eventual £7.5 million move to Wimbledon.

"John has had a difficult season, but there's always been commitment to the cause and he now has the opportunity to be in the squad again," Gould said.

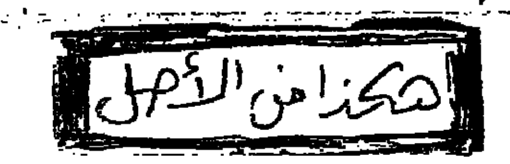
Gould will also be hoping Ryan Giggs comes through his two big games for Manchester United, against Internazionale in the second leg of the European Cup quarter-final tonight and against Everton in the FA Carling Premiership on Sunday, to make a return to the international scene. Giggs missed the victories against Denmark and Belarus that have given Wales a genuine chance of qualifying for the finals. Gary Speed, who missed the Belarus game through suspension, will return to the side as captain to win his fiftieth cap. There is also a recall for Andy Melville, of Sunderland, while Mark Crossley, the Nottingham Forest goalkeeper, returns after injury. Craig Bellamy, the Norwich City youngster who scored the winning goal against Denmark, is also included.

Speed: fiftieth cap

Meanwhile, Keith O'Neill, the Norwich striker who is moving to Middlesbrough this week, has been recalled to the Ireland squad for the group eight European championship qualifying tie with Macedonia in Skopje on March 27.

O'Neill missed the Republic's 2-0 victory against Paraguay in Dublin last month because of an ankle injury.

Mick McCarthy, the Ireland manager, has also called up Stephen Carr, the uncapped Tottenham Hotspur defender. McCarthy will be anxious there is no repeat of the 3-2 defeat by the Macedonians in Skopje in a World Cup qualifying match in April 1997.



SPORT IN BRIEF

Halafihi to find and assist elite players

RUGBY LEAGUE: The Rugby Football League (RFL) has appointed Nick Halafihi, who recently stood down as development executive at St Helens, in an elite talent-spotting role. Halafihi, a forward for Sheffield Eagles, Hull Kingston Rovers and London Crusaders, will identify and help to nurture potential future international players.

The one-year post is funded by Sport England, formerly the English Sports Council. Halafihi, 31, also will develop the RFL application for funds from the body. Halafihi said the ambition was to challenge Australia at international level. Meanwhile, Wayne Bennett, the Australia coach, has stood down after one season. Bennett wants to concentrate on his club role at Brisbane Broncos, who have lost their opening two games of the season.

CYCLING: Carsten Wolf has been suspended for six months for failing a drugs test at the Grenoble six-day race last October. The German rider also has been ordered to pay a 2,000 Swiss francs (£850) fine.

CRICKET: Jamie Cox, the opening batsman, will replace David Boon as the captain of Tasmania. Boon, 38, will become Tasmania's marketing and special events co-ordinator after he returns from his final season as captain-coach of Durham. Cox, 29, will captain Somerset this summer.

GOLF: Lee Westwood and Darren Clarke will contest the Macau Open from April 15 to 18, a week after the US Masters in Augusta.

BOXING: Shea Neary's defence of his World Boxing Union light-welterweight title against Mike Griffith, of the United States, in Dublin next month has been postponed — probably until June — after Neary, of Liverpool, suffered a hand injury in training.

SPEEDWAY: Elite League matches will be shown live by Sky Sports this season, beginning on May 13.

CRICKET: JOY UNCONFINED IN WEST INDIES AS LONG LOSING RUN COMES TO AN END

Lara tempers joy with caution

FROM PAT GIBSON IN KINGSTON, JAMAICA

KINGSTON (fourth day of five) West Indies beat Australia by ten wickets

WHAT a difference a day makes — 24 little hours. The message, crudely scrawled on a piece of cardboard at Sabina Park, said it all as the West Indies completed a famous victory over Australia in the second Test yesterday to level the series and bring joy, not to say relief, to the entire Caribbean.

The cricket-loving peoples of these islands had despaired of their team when they returned home from a calamitous tour of South Africa to lose the first Test in Trinidad after being bowled out for 51, the lowest score in their history.

It looked as though they were going the same way here until Brian Lara, the captain who had been put on probation for the first two Tests because of his previous errors and omissions, changed everything on what will always be remembered as one of the great days of West Indian cricket.

Lara scored 213 himself, shared a record-breaking fifth wicket partnership of 322 with Jimmy Adams and so demoralised Australia, the best Test side in the world, remember, that they dropped their bundle, as they say in Sydney and Melbourne, and went down to defeat, losing their last two wickets inside 40 minutes of the fourth day.

It was the perfect moment for the West Indies Cricket Board to announce that all was forgiven and confirm Lara as captain for the rest of the series, but they do not do things like that in these politically-sensitive parts and they will keep him waiting for another day or so.

Not that Lara, relaxed and smiling in his moment of triumph, seemed unduly bothered. "There were criteria set out by the board — I hope they were confidential — and I have tried to improve my personality and my character to see how best I can satisfy them," he said. "I think that we owe it to the public to be ambassadors for West Indies cricket and represent them the way they feel we should represent them.

"For the future Test matches, I would love to continue on this sort of high and see how best we can win back the Sir Frank Worrell Trophy. If the board doesn't see it that way, I've always said that my love for West Indies cricket and my commitment to it is unconditional. I'm just happy to be back among the runs, happy to be in a winning team and happy to play that sort of role.

"I would not pinpoint any one thing that has changed because I think this has been an all-round effort. You have got to realise that no one individual could be responsible for something as disastrous as South Africa. I played a part and I must take some responsibility. Everybody has their weaknesses but the main thing is that whatever happens to me I learn from it.

"I've improved as a person, even outside cricket, living my day-to-day life. That's most important. You've got to learn from whatever experience you have. As you get older you get wiser."

As for his innings, which, considering the pressure he was under, must be the greatest he has played, Lara said: "I think it can go down as the most important. I really rated my 277 against Australia in Sydney in 1992-93, but the day before yesterday meant so much to West Indies cricket.

"I would love it to be the turning point. But I think we've got to be very cautious when we're talking about the Australians. They are the best Test-playing team in the world, they are accustomed to winning and I think they are going to come back at us hard in the next Test. They are not going to mess up easily."

We will have to see about that. The way their batting crumbled in the second innings suggested that Lara's towering performance had got to them psychologically, although Steve Waugh, tasting defeat for the first time as captain, was quick to deny that. "We are certainly not in a Lara daze," he said. "He's played well in one innings and I think great players like Lara and Tendulkar save their best for the best teams. But we know we can get Lara out. Glenn McGrath has probably got him out eight or nine times in his Test career. We don't want to get too concerned about one player."

Waugh did admit that his side had had "a big wake up call" and added: "In a way it might be good for us. If we had won this Test easily then I guess the rest of the series might not have been so tough. We've had a lot of hard series against the West Indies and the last two Tests are going to be something special."

They certainly are, in one way or another, if the first two are anything to go by and especially if Shivnarine Chanderpaul and Carl Hooper are available to strengthen the batting in Barbados in the third Test, which starts on March 26.



Lara hugs Campbell, the opening batsman, at the fall of the last Australia wicket. Photograph: Shaun Botterill/Allsport



Steve Waugh and his team reflect glumly on a rare defeat

Long Room witnesses end of long march

Michael Henderson is present at a historic moment as MCC parades its first women members

Marylebone Cricket Club, the most famous in the world, finally crossed the sexual Rubicon yesterday when it admitted ten women to its venerable congregation, which is 18,000-strong. No longer will its initials be held to represent Male Chauvinism. In the last year of the century it is, at long last, moving in step with the spirit of the times.

Eight of the women appeared in the Long Room to hear Tony Lewis, the MCC president, welcome them to the club as honorary members. It was a symbolic act, but an effective one, in keeping with Lewis's stated ambition to build on the progressive work of his predecessor, Colin Ingleby-Mackenzie.

It was appreciated, too. Rachael Heyhoe Flint, who has come to be regarded as the regimental mascot of women's cricket, thought she would never live to see the day. Well, she has.

With the passing of each year it seemed more and more of an absurd barrier. As Lewis said: "MCC, above all, is a cricket club. Women play cricket, and so we could not claim to be a great cricket club unless we had a women's team and women members."

And so, on May 11, the first MCC women's team will take the field in East Molesey, Surrey, no doubt to great hoopla. Then everything will settle down and even the doughtiest of opponents to this measure will realise how silly their cause looked from the other side of that famous pavilion.

MCC can only benefit from this benign accommodation. Lord's will not suddenly be swamped by women bursting to get into the Long Room. After all, it takes the better part of 16 years after being proposed to become a full member.

A World Cup begins in England two months from now and, on a gorgeous spring morning, Lord's looked wonderful, with the massive new media centre almost ready for christening. There is no better time to make a fresh start, which is what everybody says at this time of year but, on the threshold of another season, a vital one for cricket in this country, that is not just an idle thought.

"Was the motive behind this just cash?" asked Lewis. "Emphatically, no! Look out of the windows and you will see three major new buildings, the media centre, the Grand Stand and the new Nursery ground pavilion — each one displaying some of the most imaginative and unexpected architecture in Britain.

'The club will be greater for it'

"All three were constructed within the last three years without a penny of public money.

"I cannot say that I identified with accusations of being misogynist, or male chauvinist, and I want to assure our newest members that our decision has nothing to do with being seen to act correctly. MCC is not that sort of club."

He told the newcomers: "You have joined a club which will excel in communications . . . It is my honour to welcome you. Today is yours, and hereafter. It is time for MCC to embrace cricketers of both sexes, and the club will be the greater for it."

The honorary members are: Betty Archdale, Edna Barker, Audrey Collins, Carole Cornthwaite, Jackie Court, Rachael Heyhoe Flint, Sheila Hill, Norma Izard, Diana Rait Kerr, Netta Rheinberg

New era, page 9

FOR THE RECORD

BASKETBALL

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION (NBA): Toronto 89 Charlotte 82; Orlando 74 Philadelphia 73, Milwaukee 102 New York 108, Minnesota 83 Utah 90; Chicago 85 Cleveland 89 (OT); Dallas 91 Portland 106; Denver 110 Vancouver 84

BOWLS

BELFAST: British women's indoor international: England bt Wales 116-93 (England skips first. D Hunt 17, S Oliver 14; K Strutt 18, L Evans 22; B Alderson 31, A Damton 8; E Bessell 19, D Rowlands 16; D Hankin 19, J Ackland 16; J Roylance 12, M Tanner 17)

CRICKET

SABINA PARK (fourth day of five): West Indies beat Australia by ten wickets

AUSTRALIA: First innings 256 (S R Waugh 100, M E Waugh 67, C A Walsh 4 for 55).

Second innings

M T G Elliott lbw b Perry	16
M J Slater b Walsh	0
J L Langer c Jacobs b Perry	24
M E Waugh c Walsh b Ambrose	21
*S R Waugh c Jacobs b Perry	9
G S Blewett c Lara b Perry	30
†I A Healy run out	10
S K Warne c Joseph b Walsh	23
J N Gillespie c Jacobs b Walsh	7
S C G MacGill c Joseph b Perry	7
G D McGrath not out	11
Extras (lb 3, nb 16)	19
Total	177

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-4, 2-36, 3-51, 4-63, 5-88, 6-107, 7-137, 8-157, 9-159.

BOWLING: Ambrose 14-4-28-1; Walsh 18-3-52-3; Perry 26-8-70-5; Collins 8-0-24-0

WEST INDIES: First innings 431 (B C Lara 213, J C Adams 94, McGrath 5 for 93)

Second innings

S Ragoonath not out	2
S L Campbell not out	1
Total (for no wicket)	3

BOWLING: McGrath 0.3-0-3-0.

Man of the match: B C Lara.

Umpires: P Willey (England) and S A Bucknor

First test: Australia beat West Indies by 312 runs

Tests to come: Third: Bridgetown, Barbados, March 26. Fourth: St John's, Antigua, April 3.

Challenge Cup
Bangladesh v Pakistan

DHAKA (Bangladesh won toss): Pakistan beat Bangladesh by 152 runs

PAKISTAN

Shahid Afridi lbw Hasibul	17
Wajahatullah Wasti c Khaled b Manjurul	18
Saeed Anwar run out	64
Ijaz Ahmed c Shenar b Aminul	51
Inzamam-ul-Haq c Mohammad b Hasibul	70
Azhar Mahmood c Khaled b Naimur	30
Moin Khan b Hasibul	32
Saqlain Mushtaq not out	1
Extras (b 5, w 4, nb 1)	10
Total (for 7 wkts, 50 overs)	293

Wasim Akram, Shoaib Akhtar, Arshad Khan did not bat.

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-34, 2-50, 3-135, 4-175, 5-212, 6-293, 7-293.

BOWLING: Hasibul Hossain 10-0-50-3; Manjurul Islam 6-0-43-1, Naimur Rahman 10-0-53-1; Khaled Mahmud 10-0-59-0, Mohammed Rafiq 8-0-50-0; Aminul Islam 6-0-33-1.

BANGLADESH

Shahriar Hossain c Saeed b Wasim	5
Mehrab Hossain b Shoaib	4
Al-Shahriar b Shoaib	17
Aminul Islam run out	16
Akram Khan c Moin b Wajahatullah	28
Naimur Rahman b Wajahatullah	8
Khaled Mahmud c&b Saeed	6
Mohammed Rafiq c Moin b Wajahatullah	29
Khaled Masood c Azhar b Ijaz	12
Hasibul Hossain c Shahid b Saeed	0
Manjurul Islam not out	1
Extras (lb 5, w 5, nb 5)	15
Total (40.5 overs)	141

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-12, 2-18, 3-30, 4-46, 5-85, 6-90, 7-121, 8-125, 9-129.

BOWLING: Wasim Akram 3-0-11-1, Shoaib Akhtar 4-0-15-2; Azhar Mahmud 5-2-8-0, Saqlain Mushtaq 6-3-9-0; Arshad Khan 6-0-16-0; Shahid Afridi 5-0-22-0; Wajahatullah Wasti 5-0-36-3; Saeed Anwar 5-2-9-2; Ijaz Ahmed 1.5-0-10-1.

Umpires: D B Cowie (New Zealand) and D R Shepherd (England).

CYCLING

CIVITANOVA MARCHE, ITALY: Tirreno-Adriatico race: Seventh stage (160km): 1, S De Jongh (Holl) 4hr 19min 10sec; 2, Z Spruch (Pol); 3, F Guidi (It); 4, L Michaelsen (Den); 5, E Zabel (Ger); 6, A Petacchi (It); 7, F Simon (Fr); 8, A Edo (Sp); 9, L Guidi (It); 10, M Bartoli (It) all same time. **Overall standings:** 1, M Bartoli (It) 31hr 39min 16sec; 2, D Rebellin (It) at 9sec; 3, S Garzelli (It) 14; 4, L Jalabert (Fr) 21; 5, I Gonzalez (Sp) 30.

FOOTBALL

Monday's late results

UNIBOND LEAGUE: Premier division: Emley 1 Winsford 1.

DR MARTENS LEAGUE: Premier division: Atherstone 2 Salisbury 0.

RYMAN LEAGUE: Premier division: Dagenham and Redbridge 1 Harrow 0.

FA PREMIER ACADEMY LEAGUE: Under-19: Coventry 5 Norwich 1. Under-17: Everton 1 Crystal Palace 0

AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Northampton 3 Fulham 0.

PONTIN'S LEAGUE: Premier division: Blackburn 1 Manchester Utd 0; Sunderland 1 Aston Villa 1

SCREWFIX DIRECT LEAGUE: Premier division: Keynsham 0 Backwell 1.

ICE HOCKEY

NATIONAL LEAGUE (NHL): Buffalo 2 NY Islanders 1; NY Rangers 1 Washington 1; Phoenix 5 Carolina 5; Vancouver 1 New Jersey 2; Los Angeles 4 Ottawa 0.

REAL TENNIS

HATFIELD HOUSE: British Seniors Amateur Championships: Singles: Quarter-finals: H R Angus bt D R Brazer 6-2, 6-1, R Knight bt W R B Colegrave 2-6, 6-3, 6-2, A N W Beeson bt C Dean 6-2, 6-5, J D Ward bt T Harper 6-1, 6-0. Semi-final: Angus bt Knight 6-0, 6-2, Ward bt Beeson 6-3, 6-2. Final: Angus bt Ward 6-2, 6-1.

RUGBY UNION

IRELAND SQUAD (v Scotland at Murrayfield, March 20): C M P O'Shea (London Irish); J P Bishop (London Irish), K M Maggs (Bath), J C Bell (Dungannon), G Dempsey (Terenure College); D G Humphreys (Dungannon), C D McGuinness (St Mary's College); P M Clohessy (Young Munster), K G M Wood (Harlequins), P S Wallace (Saracens), P S Johns (Saracens, capt), J W Davidson (Castres), D O'Cuinneagain (Sale), A J Ward (Ballynahinch), E R P Miller (Terenure College). Replacements (from): R A J Henderson (Wasps), E P Elwood (Galwegians), C J Scally (UCD), V C P Costello (St Mary's College), T Brennan (St Mary's College), M J Galwey (Shannon), J M Fitzpatrick (Dungannon), R P Nesdale (Newcastle).

ENGLAND A SQUAD (v France at Redruth, March 19): C Catling (Gloucester); L Lloyd (Leicester), N Burrows (London Irish), P Mensah (Harlequins), T Underwood (Newcastle); M Mapletoft (Gloucester), S Benton (Gloucester), G Rowntree (Leicester), G Chuter (Saracens), D Crompton (Richmond), M Cornwell (Gloucester), R Fidler (Gloucester), B Clarke (Richmond), A Vander (Richmond), T Diprose (Saracens, capt). Replacements: J Ewens (Bedford), A King (Wasps), N Walshe (Harlequins), S Ojomoh (Gloucester), S Shaw (Wasps), T Woodman (Gloucester), M Regan (Bath)

SPEEDWAY

SEVERN BRIDGE TROPHY: Reading 39 Newport 51

SNOW REPORTS

SKI CLUB

	Depth (cm) L	Depth (cm) U	Piste	Conditions: Runs to Resort	Off/p	Weather (5pm)	°C	Last snow
Austria								
Obergurgl	60	290	Good	Slushy	Varied	Sun	1	08/03
St Anton	80	480	Good	Open	Spring	Sun	0	08/03
Canada								
Lake Louise	145	180	Good	Open	Powder	Sun	-4	15/03
France								
Alpe d'Huez	152	340	Hard	Hard	Spring	Sun	4	08/03
Flaine	135	515	Good	Slushy	Varied	Sun	14	08/03
La Clusaz	65	280	Good	Slushy	Spring	Sun	10	08/03
La Plagne	160	250	Fair	Slushy	Varied	Sun	-2	08/03
La Tania	110	255	Good	Hard	Spring	Sun	1	08/03
Les Arcs	150	328	Fair	Open	Varied	Fine	11	08/03
Megeve	100	280	Fair	Slushy	Spring	Sun	6	06/03
Méribel	85	250	Good	Slushy	Spring	Sun	1	09/03
Tignes	150	260	Good	Open	Spring	Sun	1	08/03
Val Thorens	150	300	Fair	Open	Spring	Sun	1	08/03
Val d'Isère	105	300	Good	Slushy	Varied	Sun	-4	10/03
Valmorel	100	240	Fair	Slushy	Spring	Fine	9	08/03
Italy								
Cervinia	140	250	Good	Open	Crusty	Fine	2	11/03
Cortina	85	125	Fair	Worn	Spring	Sun	5	07/03
Livigno	79	198	Good	Hard	Spring	Fine	1	08/03
Norway								
Geilo	125	125	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-4	16/03
Switzerland								
Crans Montana	50	290	Good	Hard	Spring	Fine	11	08/03
Davos	150	300	Hard	Open	Varied	Sun	3	07/03
Grindelwald	30	250	Good	Open	Heavy	Fine	7	08/03
Klosters	90	290	Good	Hard	Varied	Sun	3	09/03
Murren	90	350	Good	Open	Spring	Fine	5	08/03
Saas Fee	85	215	Good	Slushy	Spring	Sun	7	11/03
St Moritz	70	120	Good	Hard	Spring	Sun	-3	06/03
Verbier	80	185	Good	Slushy	Spring	Sun	7	11/03
Villars	80	240	Good	Hard	Spring	Sun	5	08/03
United States								
Aspen	135	158	Good	Open	Varied	Fine	-6	13/03
Deer Valley	238	265	Good	Open	Powder	Fair	0	12/03

L = lower slopes; U = upper slopes

http://www.skiclub.co.uk

TODAY'S FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 7.30 unless stated

European Cup

Quarter-final, second leg

Dynamo Kiev (1) v Real Madrid (1) (7.45)

Inter Milan (0) v Manchester Utd (2) (7.45)

Kaiserslautern (0) v Bayern Munich (2) (7.45)

Olympiakos (1) v Juventus (2) (7.45)

Nationwide Conference

Forest Green v Yeovil (7.45)

DR MARTENS LEAGUE: Southern division: Brackley Town v Baldock (7.45). Midland division: Paget Rangers v Moor Green (7.45); Solihull v Sutton Coldfield.

THE TIMES FA YOUTH CUP: Fifth-round replay: Crystal Palace v Arsenal.

THE FOOTBALL LEAGUE YOUTH ALLIANCE: North East Conference: Darlington v Scarborough (11.0).

AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Brentford v Norwich (2.0); Brighton v Wimbledon (7.0); Cambridge v Southampton (2.0); Crystal Palace v Colchester; Gillingham v West Ham; Luton v Wycombe (2.0); Oxford v Barnet; Peterborough v Bournemouth (7.0); Watford v Queens Park Rangers.

PONTIN'S LEAGUE: Premier division: Birmingham v Stoke (7.15), Nottingham Forest v Derby (7.0). First division: Bolton v Tranmere (7.0); Manchester City v Grimsby (7.0); Middlesbrough v Wolverhampton (7.0). Second division: Blackpool v Newcastle (7.0); Huddersfield v York (7.0); Rotherham v Shrewsbury (2.0); Scarborough v Notts County (2.0); Wrexham v Lincoln (2.0). Third division: Bury v Hull (2.0); Chester v Carlisle (2.0); Chesterfield v Hartlepool (2.0). League Cup: Quarter-final: Darlington v Bradford (7.0).

FAI HARP LAGER NATIONAL LEAGUE: Premier division: Finn Harps v Sligo (3.0)

FA PREMIER ACADEMY LEAGUE: Under-19: Man City v Crewe (1.0); Aston Villa v Liverpool (1.0). Under-17: Aston Villa v Liverpool (1.0).

SCHWEPPES ESSEX SENIOR LEAGUE: Premier division: Bowers United v Concord Rangers

COMPLETE MUSIC HELLENIC LEAGUE: Premier division: Swindon Supermarine v Cirencester Academy.

ARNOTT INSURANCE NORTH LEAGUE: First division: Guisborough v Billingham.

WINSTONLEAD KENT LEAGUE: Premier League: Canterbury v Greenwich.

MINERVA SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS LEAGUE: Premier division: Brache Sparta v Waltham Abbey; Buckingham Athletic v Milton Keynes; Toddington v Brook House.

HIGHLAND LEAGUE: Clachnacuddin v Keith; Fort William v Forres Mechanics, Huntly v Fraserburgh, Rothes v Peterhead

COURAGE COMBINED COUNTIES LEAGUE: Premier division: Feltham v Bedfont.

BANKS'S BREWERY LEAGUE: Premier division: Smethwick Rangers v Bandon; Tipton Town v Bustleholme; Wolverhampton v Lye Town.

JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE: First division: Cowes Sports v Gosport; Hamble ASSC v Whitchurch

UNIJET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE: First division: East Preston v Chichester; Hassocks v Langney Sports.

RUGBY UNION

CLUB MATCH: Richmond XV v Royal Navy (at Athletic Ground, 7.30).

RUGBY LEAGUE

NORTHERN FORD PREMIERSHIP: Featherstone v Widnes (7.30), Whitehaven v Lancashire Lynx (7.30), Hull KR v Oldham (7.30).

OTHER SPORT

BASKETBALL: Budweiser League: Birmingham Bullets v Edinburgh Rocks (at Aston Villa, 7.30). Worthing Bears v Derby Storm (8.0).

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

BY ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

I like this cautionary tale, recounted against himself by David Perkins, one of the regulars in the TGR £5 game.

Dealer South | **Love all** | **Rubber bridge**

	North: ♠ A K J / ♡ Q / ♢ K 10 7 / ♣ A Q 9 7 4 3	
West: ♠ 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 2 / ♡ J 2 / ♢ – / ♣ 10 6 2		East: ♠ Q 3 / ♡ 7 6 / ♢ Q J 9 5 4 3 / ♣ K 8 5
	South: ♠ – / ♡ A K 10 9 8 5 4 3 / ♢ A 8 6 2 / ♣ J	

S	W	N	E
2 H	Pass	3 C	Pass
3 H	Pass	4 NT	Pass
5 H	Pass	7 H	All Pass

Contract: Seven Hearts by South. Lead: ten of spades.

North showed good appreciation of his assets, particularly the value of the queen of hearts.

South (Perkins) showed his "nasty streak" (his own words) at trick one. He put in the jack of spades. I hope you see the point of that play. It is to torture East with false hope if he has the queen. I remember Terence Reese once doing something similar against me. He had a ten-card trump fit missing the queen, with the ace and king in dummy. He played the ace, to which all followed, then crossed back to hand slightly riskily to lead towards the king. I showed out. With a sigh he looked at my discard, then put up the king dropping my partner's now singleton queen, while emitting the famous breathless cackle later frequently imitated by Jonathan Cansino and Irving Rose.

Anyway, Perkins had achieved a similar coup when East played the queen of spades. He ruffed and led a heart to the queen, West playing the jack and East the six. Belatedly, Perkins realised that his contract was not absolutely foolproof even though the hearts had broken. He would have liked to return to hand with a spade ruff, but the ace and king of spades were two of his thirteen tricks. Now a 6-0 break in one of the minors would be fatal. Which one to lead? He had seven cards in each. He chose a diamond to the ace. West trumped it with the two of hearts. Perkins's little joke at trick one had cost him a grand slam.

As Perkins pointed out afterwards, he could still have recovered by cashing the ace of spades and discarding a club. Then he could have ruffed a club high in order to re-enter his hand to draw trumps.

KEENE on CHESS

BY RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Linares

The important tournament at Linares in Spain was one of the highest rated in the history of the game. In view of its significance I will be giving all of the decisive games played in the competition. Most have been published here already. Today I continue with two wins by Peter Svidler. It was an indication of the strength of the event that Svidler could do no better than tie for last place with Michael Adams.

White: Peter Svidler
Black: Peter Leko
Linares 1999

Ruy Lopez

	White	Black
1	e4	e5
2	Nf3	Nc6
3	Bb5	Nf6
4	0-0	Bc5
5	c3	0-0
6	d4	Bb6
7	Qd3	d6
8	Bg5	h6
9	Bh4	Bd7
10	Nbd2	a6
11	Bc4	exd4
12	cxd4	g5
13	Bg3	Nh5
14	e5	Kg7
15	exd6	Nxg3
16	dxc7	Qxc7
17	fxg3	g4
18	Nh4	Ne5
19	Nf5+	Bxf5
20	Qxf5	Bxd4+
21	Kh1	Qd6
22	Rae1	Rad8
23	Bb3	Bxb2
24	Nc4	Nxc4
25	Qxg4+	Qg6
26	Qxc4	b5
27	Qb4	Rc8
28	Re3	Qg5
29	Qd2	Bf6
30	h4	Qc5
31	Re4	h5
32	Ref4	Rc6
33	Rf5	Qc3
34	Qf4	Rd8
35	Rxh5	Qd2
36	Qg4+	Kf8
37	Rh8+	Ke7
38	Rh7	Rf8
39	Qe4+	Kd7
40	Bxf7	Black resigns

Diagram of final position

White: Peter Svidler
Black: Michael Adams
Linares 1999

Ruy Lopez

	White	Black
1	e4	e5
2	Nf3	Nc6
3	Bb5	a6
4	Ba4	Nf6
5	0-0	Be7
6	Re1	b5
7	Bb3	0-0
8	h3	d6
9	c3	Nd7
10	d4	Nb6
11	Nbd2	exd4
12	cxd4	Nb4
13	Nf1	c5
14	a3	Nc6
15	Be3	Na5
16	Bc2	Nbc4
17	Bc1	cxd4
18	Nxd4	Bf6
19	Rb1	d5
20	b3	dxe4
21	Bxe4	Bxd4
22	bxc4	Rb8
23	Bf4	Rb6
24	cxb5	Rxb5
25	Rxb5	axb5
26	Ne3	Bxe3
27	Bxe3	Qxd1
28	Rxd1	Be6
29	Bc5	Rc8
30	Bb4	Nc4
31	Bc6	Nb2
32	Rd2	Nc4
33	Rd4	Black resigns

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

ACROASIS
a. A pustulent infection
b. An oral discourse
c. A climbing plant

APOTACTICAL
a. Tactless
b. Turning away by magic
c. Renouncing

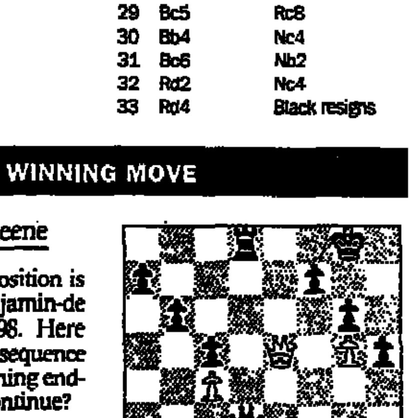
BASHALICK
a. A mythical monster
b. Hot herbal drink
c. A Turkish district

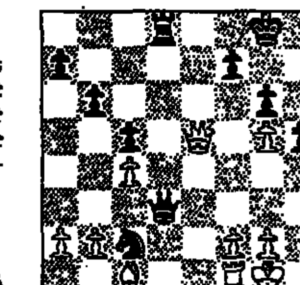
BRICOLE
a. A hippoeuvre at dressage
b. A red cabbage
c. A catapult

Answers on page 46

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene





Black to play. This position is from the game Benjamin-de Firmian, Denver 1998. Here Black found a clever sequence to emerge with a winning endgame. How did he continue?

Solution on page 46

RUGBY UNION

Grayson's injury lets in Catt by back door

BY DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

THE rise and fall and rise again of Mike Catt was duly continued yesterday. He has accumulated 32 caps in a mercurial career for England over five seasons and will return at fly half on Saturday to play France in the Five Nations Championship at Twickenham, the only amendment to the XV that left Dublin earlier this month tolerably content with the defeat of Ireland.

Catt, 27, recovers the No 10 jersey because of the groin injury suffered by Paul Grayson that will keep him out of the remainder of the championship, but he does so on his own merits as well. Catt played well in the victory over South Africa in December and if his game was lacking lustre against Scotland, the same criticism was true of several colleagues.

"It's always disappointing being left out of anything, but I have another chance and I have to work from there," Catt said. "We seem to chop and change every other week at fly half, but now I'm in the driving seat again I have to try and cement it. It was important for me to show I was back in the swing of things playing against Richmond last weekend, and things went well."

Predictably, Clive Woodward, the England coach, made no other changes save those forced upon him among the replacements. Danny Grewcock, the Saracens lock, damaged knee ligaments in training last week — he is likely to be out for at least six weeks — and surrenders his place on the bench to Garath Archer. Catt's place as utility back goes to Barrie-Jon Mather, the Sale centre, who did not enjoy the happiest of A internationals against Ireland.

Mather plays outside centre for his club, and has played wing since his return from rugby league last summer, but his handling has not proved the best part of his game and he does not make the physical impact one would expect from a player standing 6ft 6in and 16st 4lb. Nevertheless, he is the only uncapped member of the squad and is now within reach at senior level of emulating his achievements as a schoolboy international, albeit that he was then playing at lock.

Woodward had no difficulty making the straightforward change of Catt for Grayson. He had the option of moving Jonathan Wilkinson to the pivotal role but has been more than happy with the youngster's performance at centre. In any case, Wilkinson's strong left foot ensures that he can take up the fly-half role if occasion demands it. "We are getting into a position of strength with Catt, Wilkinson and even Matt Perry capable of playing fly half," Woodward said.

"I was disappointed when Paul Grayson had to pull out. Grayson did a fantastic job for us in Ireland and played exactly the way we wanted him to play. Now Catt has a marvellous opportunity in a colossal game and I have been happy with the way guys have reacted when they are not in the starting XV — people like Catt and Matt Dawson have been very positive, they know their chance will come again."

The match will be Jason Leonard's seventieth for his country and only three other players [Rory Underwood 85, Will Carling 72 and Rob Andrew 71] stand ahead of him. That is a depth of experience that Warren Gatland, the Ireland coach, is striving to achieve with his squad, which shows two changes for the meeting with Scotland at Murrayfield on Saturday.

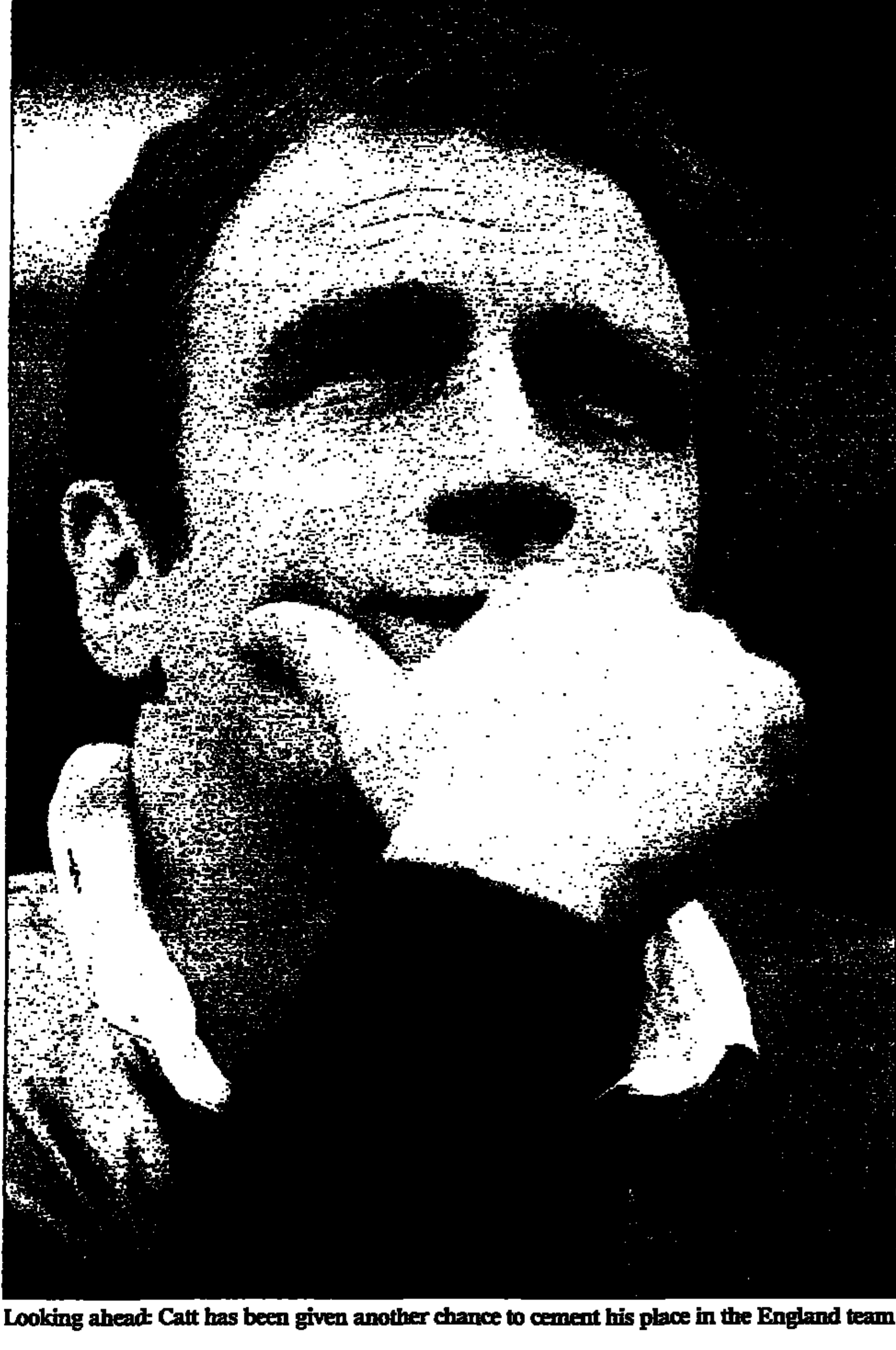
Jonathan Bell returns to the centre and Eric Miller will play No 8. Bell would have played against England but for a dead leg, the luckless Rob Henderson reverting to the replacements of whom eight will travel to Scotland today. Among them will be Victor Costello, whose place in the back row has been taken by Miller after an anonymous showing against England. Costello or Trevor Brennan, his club colleague, will be pruned from the squad tomorrow while Miller has a third opportunity to show he should be regarded as a first choice.

He played blindside flanker against France and No 8 against Wales. When he came on in the final quarter against England he made a significant impact and Gatland was criticised for not introducing him earlier when it was evident that Costello was struggling.

Ireland team, page 45

ENGLAND TEAM

M B Perry (Bath); D L Rees (Sale), J P Wilkinson (Newcastle), J C Guscott (Bath), D D Luger (Harlequins); M J Catt (Bath), K P P Bracken (Saracens); J Leonard (Harlequins), R Cockerill (Leicester), D J Garforth (Leicester), M O Johnson (Leicester), T A K Rodber (Northampton/Army), R A Hill (Saracens), N A Back (Leicester), L B N Dallaglio (Wasps, captain). Replacements: N D Beal (Northampton), B-J Mather (Sale), M J S Dawson (Northampton), M E Corry (Leicester), G S Archer (Newcastle), V E Ubogu (Bath), N McCarthy (Gloucester).



Looking ahead: Catt has been given another chance to cement his place in the England team

Injuries to force changes on France

BY DAVID HANDS

THE France team that will be named today to play England on Saturday will have undergone change after the unexpected defeat by Wales, but will hardly resemble the XV they will field in the World Cup this autumn. How can it, when injury has ripped so badly at the French seams?

England may regret their damaged midfield, but France have lost almost half a team. David Venditti and Christophe Lamaison, the Brive backs, have only just returned to action and the talented Bourgoin centre, Stephane Glas, is still nursing a broken leg. Richard Dourthe limped out of the Wales game and will not return to this championship and behind them all, the incomparable Jean-Luc Sadourny is still honing his game at full back for Colomiers after a belated start to the season.

Pascal Giordani, the Dax centre, is likely to win his first cap alongside Franck Comba but the significant changes will be in the back row. The recall of Christophe Juillet, the forceful No 8 from Stade Français, seems likely to push Thomas Lievremont to the blind-side flank with Richard Castel on the open-side.

Lievremont's reading of the game has been reminiscent of that which Dean Richards used to offer England. He is the nearest France have come to replacing Abelatif Benazzi, the former captain, who has played only three games of his comeback with Agen after an absence of eight months following knee surgery.

LINKS

WEBSITES: www.scrum.com — general rugby site
www.planet-rugby.com — general site, home of IBM world rankings

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 45

ACROASIS

(b) In ancient history, an oral discourse, a discourse listened to. Transliteration of the Greek word.

APOTACTICAL

(c) Renouncing, recreant. From the Greek *apotdssesthai (cf. Luke* ix, 61) to say adieu to, renounce.

BASHALICK

(c) Earlier form of Pashalik, the district under the jurisdiction of a pasha.

BRICOLE

(c) An ancient military engine or catapult for throwing stones or bolts. Hence, in the absurd game of real tennis, the rebound of a ball from the wall of a tennis-court.

SOLUTION TO THE WINNING MOVE

Solution: 1 ...Qxf1+! 2 Kxf1 Rd1+ 3 Ke2 Re1+ 4 Kd3 Rxe5 5 Kxc2 Re2+ with an easy win on material.

TELEVISION CHOICE

TV for armchair scientists

Tomorrow's World: Megalab
BBC1, 7pm

This *Tomorrow's World* special is mostly live so there are no preview tapes to judge it by. Ambitious it certainly is: as part of a national week of science, engineering and technology, Peter Snow and Philippa Forrester are encouraging viewers to take part in a series of experiments probing subjects as diverse as memory and aesthetics to explore the workings of the brain. Jez Nelson reports on the world's first Internet single which will be recorded during the course of the programme — plenty of big names taking part and the final mix to go to charity. And live from East Sussex, Craig Doyle covers the move of the Belle Tout lighthouse to save the listed building from falling into the sea because of the erosion of the cliff face at Beachy Head.

Science in the home with Peter Snow and Philippa Forrester: *Megalab* (BBC1, 7pm)

Casualty 250: The Full Medical
BBC1, 8pm

A bit of Auntie patting herself on the back here. *Casualty* reached its 250th episode last month and this behind-the-scenes documentary charts its success and shows how it has mirrored tensions in the NHS even, at one point, provoking questions in Parliament. When the series began in the mid-1980s the NHS was underfunded, overstretched and being progressively run down. Much of this was (and is) reflected in Holby's A&E. Drama-wise, in the early days, you could glimpse such present-day luminaries as Kate Winslet, Robert Carlyle, Robson Green, and Sam Shepherd. Brenda Fricker and Lisa Coleman were regulars and even Norman Wisdom put in an appearance.

Modern Times: Diana's Neighbours
BBC2, 9pm

A smashing study of Little Englanders at war — or how the "toffs" of Kensington Gardens, London W8, responded to Gordon Brown's scheme to build a memorial garden in honour of the late Princess of Wales. Diana's fans would love it — they're still hanging flowers on the gilded gates of her home. But the action committee's Mrs Ethne Rudd will have none of it. "I think their poems are sweet," she says of the fans, "even if they are dreadful." Another resident, the art critic Brian Sewell, is more vociferous: "Kensington Gardens is part of my life . . . I won't be told what to do by a bloody Scot [Brown]." Opposing them is the local tour guide Karen Taylor who calls Ethne's lot "geriatric hooligans who throw words instead of bottles". The result of all this barracking is now known — but you get the feeling it's not over yet.

The X Files: The End
BBC1, 10pm (Northern Ireland, 11pm)

A real edge-of-the-seater closes the series. Yes, it will return but given the way this chapter ends I don't see how. Poor Mulder (David Duchovny) — you will weep for him as the credits roll. Indeed ice maiden Scully (Gillian Anderson) nearly does. What more can I say without giving too much away? Terrific opener — a chess game between a Russian grand master and a little boy. The boy says "Checkmate" and pulls back — missing a bullet intended to kill him but killing the Russian instead. Why? Does the Cigarette Smoking Man know? Or the Syndicate Elder (John Neville) who has him kidnapped? **Elizabeth Cowley**

RADIO CHOICE

Internazionale v Man United
Radio 5 and Talk Radio, 7pm

Kelvin MacKenzie, the quiet, self-effacing chap who runs Talk Radio, said in an interview with Broadcast magazine the other day that the BBC had no business buying sports rights, it ought to be "doing programmes about sparrows in Serbia and the lower-crested rhubarb hunter". While we await the formal announcement of this policy change at the Corporation, the BBC and Talk are engaged in a battle for radio rights that manifests itself tonight as a score draw: both networks are carrying live commentary from the San Siro stadium, where United defend a 2-0 first leg lead. The commentary box match is between Alan Parry and Andy Gray of Talk and Mike Ingham and Alan Green of 5 Live. Marks out of 10, please.

Four Walls
Radio 4, 4pm

The series about the environment in which we live and work returns for another run with a programme today about street furniture. This is one of my favourite subjects: much like the Ancient Mariner, I can detain people for hours by banging on about the absurd pillars, posts and shelters that have turned most of our high streets into obstacle courses. Here, Jonathan Glancey takes a more detached view, examining the history of all this clutter (it goes back further than one would think) and making some comparisons with other countries, some of which are better than us and some worse. Perhaps Brussels will provide us with a street furniture directive designed to please none of the people none of the time. **Peter Barnard**

RADIO 1 (BBC)

6.30am Zoe Ball **9.00** Simon Mayo **12.00** Jo Whiley **2.00pm** Mark Radcliffe **4.00** Chris Moyles **5.45** Newsbeat **6.00** Dave Pearce **8.00** Evening Session **10.00** Movie Update with Mark Kermode **10.10** John Peel. Dream City Film Club in session **12.00** Gilles Peterson **2.00am** Clive Warren **4.00** Scott Mills

RADIO 2 (BBC)

6.00am Alex Lester **7.30** Sarah Kennedy **9.30** Ken Bruce **12.00** Jimmy Young **2.00pm** Ed Stewart **5.05** Johnnie Walker **7.00** Nick Barraclough **8.00** Mike Harding **9.00** Berry Gordy's Motown (4/4) **10.00** Top of the Pops 2 on 2 **10.30** Richard Allinson **12.00** Katrina Leskanich **3.00am** Mo Dutta

RADIO 5 LIVE (BBC)

5.00am Morning Reports **6.00** Breakfast **9.00** Nicky Campbell **12.00** Midday News **1.00pm** The Cheltenham Festival. Day two of the festival, including at **2.35** The Queen Mother Champion Chase **4.10** Drive **7.00** News Extra **7.30** John Inverdale's Football Night. Second leg of Manchester United's European Cup quarter-final with Internazionale. See Choice. Plus, the National Lottery Draw **10.00** Littlejohn **11.00** Late Night Live with Nick Robinson **1.00am** Up All Night

TALK RADIO

6.00am The Big Boys Breakfast **9.00** Scott Chisholm & Sally James **12.00** Let's Talk Pets **1.00pm** Anna Raeburn **4.00** The Sports Zone **7.00** Internazionale v Manchester United. See Choice **10.30** James Whale **1.00am** Ian Collins

VIRGIN

6.30am Chris Evans **9.30** Russ Williams **1.00pm** Nick Abbot **4.00** Harriet Scott **6.45** Pete and Geoff **10.00** Mark Forrest **1.00am** James Merritt **4.30** Richard Allen

BBC WORLD SERVICE

5.00am The World Today **7.00** World News **7.15** Outlook **7.55** My Century **8.00** World News **8.05** Westway **8.20** Off the Shelf: Enduring Love **8.35** One Planet **9.00** World News **9.05** Sounds Right **9.20** World Ranking **9.50** Sports Round-Up **10.00** Newsdesk **10.30** Britain Today **10.45** Legal World **11.00** Newsdesk **11.30** Sports International **12.00** World News **12.05pm** Outlook **12.45** Sports Round-Up **1.00** Newshour **2.00** World News **2.05** One Planet **2.30** Meridian Live **3.00** World News **3.05** Sports Round-Up **3.15** From Our Own Correspondent **3.30** Jazzmatazz **4.00** World News **4.15** Insight **4.30** Multitrack: X-Press **5.00** Europe Today **5.30** World Business Report **5.45** Sports Round-Up **6.00** World News **6.15** Britain Today **6.30** Sports International **7.00** World News **7.05** One Planet **7.30** Legal World **7.45** Off the Shelf: Enduring Love **8.00** Newshour **9.00** World News **9.05** World Business Report **9.20** Britain Today **9.30** On Screen **10.00** World News **10.15** Sports Round-Up **10.30** Multitrack: X-Press **11.00** World News **11.05** Outlook **11.45** Insight **12.00** The World Today **12.30am** One Planet **12.55** My Century **1.00** The World Today **1.30** Meridian Live **2.00** The World Today **2.30** Everywoman **3.00** The World Today **3.20** Sports Round-Up **3.30** World Business Report **3.45** Insight **4.00** The World Today

CLASSIC FM

6.00am Nick Bailey's Easier Breakfast. Soothing music and information updates **9.00** Michael Mappin. Includes the Hall of Fame Hour and CD of the Week **12.00** Lunchtime Requests. Jane Jones spins listeners' favourite pieces of classical music **2.00pm** Concerto. Gliere (Horn Concerto) **3.00** Jamie Crick. Including information updates, Continuous Classics and Afternoon Romance **6.30** Newsnight. Headlines, arts news and guests **7.00** Smooth Classics at Seven. John Brunning introduces two hours of easy-listening sounds **9.00** Evening Concert. Barber (Adagio for Strings; Piano Concerto; Dover Beach; Violin Concerto; Knoxville Summer of 1915; Ballade; Agnus Dei) **11.00** Mann at Night. Music and conversation through till the small hours with Alan Mann **2.00am** Concerto. Gliere (Horn Concerto) (r) **3.00** Mark Griffiths. The Early Breakfast Show

RADIO 3

6.00am On Air Petroc Trelawny celebrates the 250th anniversary of Handel's *Solomon*
9.00 Masterworks with Peter Hobday. Sibelius (The Oceanides); Faure (Berceuse); Debussy (Proses lyriques); Mahler (Symphony No 4)
10.30 Artist of the Week: Gillian Weir
11.00 Sound Stories: Medical Matters A look at Chopin and his respiratory problems
12.00 Composer of the Week: Strauss
1.00pm The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert Another chance to hear a concert from last year's Cheltenham Festival. Skampa Quartet, Judith Hall, flute. Mozart (Flute Quartet in D, K285); Jonathan Lloyd (The Apprentice's Sorcery for solo flute); Janacek (String Quartet No 2, Intimate Letters) (r)
2.00 The BBC Orchestras BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra under Alun Francis and Osmo Vanska. Paul Boyes, bassoon. Dvorak (Overture: Othello); Mozart (Symphony No 41 in C, K551, Jupiter); Hummel (Bassoon Concerto in F); Brahms (Symphony No 3 in F)
4.00 Choral Evensong Live from the National Cathedral of St Patrick, Dublin, a service for St Patrick's Day. Organist and master of the choristers John Dexter. Assistant organist David Leigh
5.00 In Tune Sean Rafferty celebrates St Patrick's Day with Barry Douglas, who has founded Camerata Ireland, the first orchestra to employ musicians from both sides of the border
7.30 Performance on 3 Live from Symphony Hall, Birmingham, introduced by Chris de Souza. Vadim Repin, violin, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra under Simon Rattle. Kurtag (Grabstein fur Stefan); Gubaidulina (Violin Concerto, Offertorium) **8.15** The Nearness of History. Jonathan Keates reflects on changing views of history **8.35** Birtwistle (Earth Dances)
9.40 Postscript: The Pas de Deux (3/5)
10.00 Ensemble Penny Gore celebrates the extraordinary achievements of Haydn as principal creator of the string quartet, the piano trio and the piano sonata
10.45 Night Waves Patrick Wright and guests discuss different ways of investigating and commemorating the past
11.30 Jazz Notes The producer Bob Koester meets Alyn Shipton at his massive record shop — one of the world's biggest jazz disc record stores
12.00 Composer of the Week: Delius (r)
1.00am Through the Night 1.00 Klemens Schnorr, organ, plays music by Rheinberger, Guilmant, Reger, Widor, Holler and Dupre **2.15** Paul Kletzki (Symphony No 2) **3.00** Schools: Time and Tune **3.20** Together **3.40** Dance Workshop **4.00** The Song Tree **4.20** Scottish Resources 10-12 **4.40** Talking Points **5.05** Oscar Morawetz (Overture on a Fairy Tale) **5.15** Rosenmuller (Confitebor, Psalm 110) **5.30** Chopin (Nocturne in D flat, Op 27 No 2) **5.45** Schumann (Overture: Manfred)

RADIO 4

5.30am World News 5.35 Shipping Forecast
5.40 Inshore Forecast 5.45 Prayer for the Day
5.47 Farming Today Rural issues, with Ashley Gething
6.00 Today with James Naughtie and John Humphrys
8.35 (LW) Yesterday in Parliament Round up of political developments
9.00 Midweek The *Times* columnist Libby Purves plays host to lively conversationalists
9.45 (LW) Daily Service Director of music Alan Wilson
9.45 (FM) Serial: Letters from My Windmill Stephen Fry reads from Alphonse Daudet's passionate account of life in Provence (3/5)
10.00 Woman's Hour with Jenni Murray and guests
11.00 Group Seven Students report on their experiences of G7 meetings
11.30 Our Man at Wembley Eric Halliday assumes his upper-class accent to commentate on the forthcoming FA Cup Final (2/4) (r)
12.00 (LW) News Headlines; Shipping Forecast
12.00 (FM) News 12.04pm You and Yours Consumer news and investigations
1.00 The World at One with Nick Clarke
1.30 Inspiration! Adam Hart-Davis, Lewis Wolpert, Susan Greenfield and Sue Nelson join Chris Stuart to explore the world of innovations, discoveries and inventions
2.00 The Archers Yesterday's edition (r)
2.15 Afternoon Play: East Coast Line (Northbound) Lesley Glaister's drama exploring the secrets jealously guarded by a motley collection of train passengers. With Wendy Seager, Liam Brennan and Crawford Logan
3.00 Gardeners' Question Time (r)
3.30 Carnival Tales Mark Rickards experiences the carnival atmosphere of Brazil's original slave-trading port, Salvador (3/5)
3.45 This Sceptred Isle Anna Massey narrates part 53 of the history of Britain (r)
4.00 Four Walls New series. Jonathan Glancey examines everyday environments. See Choice (1/4)
4.30 Thinking Allowed Laurie Taylor and guests think the unthinkable about society
5.00 PM with Nigel Wrench and Clare English
6.00 Six O'Clock News
6.30 Ballylenon Controversy surrounds the Hoover cottage. Christopher Fitz-Simon's comedy drama, with T.P. McKenna and Margaret D'Arcy (5/6) (r)
7.00 The Archers William gets down to work
7.15 Front Row The nightly arts programme
7.45 The Cry of the Bittern Part 23 (r)
8.00 The Moral Maze Michael Buerk presents the ethical debate, with Janet Daley, Ian Hargreaves, David Cook and David Starkey
8.45 Lent Talks Andrew O'Hagan reflects on doubt
9.00 Frontiers Peter Evans explores how the fabric of life is woven with numbers (r)
9.30 Midweek Broadcast earlier (r)
10.00 The World Tonight Presented by Justin Webb
10.45 Book at Bedtime: Strait is the Gate David McKail reads an abridged version of André Gide's story (3/10)
11.00 Late Night on 4: Truly, Madly, Bletchley Julian Dutton's comedy (6/6)
11.15 MacFlintock's Palace Queen Victoria arrives to see Harry Houdini, filling Harry with hopes of a knighthood. Last in series (6/6)
11.30 (FM) Mammon The Mammon Corporation launches a propaganda offensive against the euro. Jonathan Aris, Mathew Bell, Julian Dutton and Wayne Forester star (5/6) (r)
11.30 (LW) Today in Parliament Political update
12.00 News 12.30am The Late Book: The Mask of Command Grant and Unheroic Leadership. Tim Pigott-Smith reads part three of John Keegan's account of leadership styles (r)
12.48 Shipping Forecast 1.00 As World Service

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.6-99.8. RADIO 2. FM 88.0-90.2. RADIO 3. FM 90.2-92.4. RADIO 4. FM 92.4-94.6; LW 198; MW 720. RADIO 5 LIVE. MW 693, 909. WORLD SERVICE. MW 648; LW 198 (12.45-5.55am). CLASSIC FM. FM 100-102. VIRGIN RADIO. FM 105.8; MW 1197, 1215. TALK RADIO. MW 1053, 1089.

Television and radio listings compiled by Perry Cleveland-Peck, Ian Hughes, Gillian Maxey, Jane Gregory and Barry O'Keefe

Great pitch — a shame about the players

REVIEW



Joe Joseph

It's only after seeing him being *interviewed* by Alan Hansen on **Football Millionaires** (BBC1) that you understand how David Beckham ran up a £1,600 telephone bill talking to his fiancée, Posh Spice, during a World Cup qualifying week in Georgia.

The first £1,000 must have been swallowed up just struggling to tell her what the weather was like. Talking coherently really *does* seem to be that much of an effort for him. If listening to Beckham speak keeps you on the edge of your seat, it's not because he is saying anything gripping, but because you're worrying if he's going to make it to the end of the sentence. Beckham has the football talent of a Titan, but the mental complexity of a tomato.

But so what if he does? Beckham doesn't earn £8 million a year as a stand-up comedian. He's a footballer. He's not paid to sound eloquent. There are very few players like Camus, or even Cantona, on today's pitches. Even great novelists can sound as dull as dirt when asked to speak in public: then again, why should we expect writers to sound fluent when their skill is milking 500 usable words out of their typewriter every day?

Beckham's inarticulacy last night was not really his problem. But it certainly was Hansen's. It meant that a documentary which must have sounded tantalising when it was being pitched — there are 70 millionaires in the Premiership; and rich footballers now have a magazine just for them, full of adverts aimed at the thickness of their wallets — proved less riveting than watching Scarborough play.

This may explain why Hansen kept returning, like a desperate drunk to the liquor bottle, to players like David Ginola and Tony Adams. Ginola and Adams, while they weren't saying much, at least said it in joined-up thinking.

Michael Owen and Alan Shearer also spoke to Hansen in full sentences: but they have both become so slick at answering journalists' questions in a way that sounds accommodating while actually giving nothing away that they, too, told us little we didn't know about modern football.

If you needed this programme to inform you that top footballers are now as famous as film stars, and earn at least as much, then you're probably not the sort of person who would have been watching anyway.

The one new fact to emerge — well, Hansen certainly made it sound like a scoop — was Beckham's admission that after his fateful sending-off during last summer's World Cup, Hoddle didn't even speak to him after the game. So Beckham behaved like a spoilt brat, after which Hoddle behaved like a chilly, charmless churl: actually, there's not much new there, either. Still, the clips of all those goals were good.

I'm not sure that **Germaine Greer: Close to the Bone**, Louise Wardle's film for BBC2's *Close Up* series, told us all that much we didn't know about its subject either: but at least it told it entertainingly, with plenty of delicious archive footage. The problem with Greer, of course, is not getting her to talk but shutting her up. She is fiercely smart. Nevertheless, a lot of what she says is either outrageous or barking, which doesn't stop her believing it entirely and passionately: this is part of her strange charm.

For example, nobody will faint with shock when they read that the subtitle of her new book, *The Whole Woman*, is "It's Time To Get Angry Again". Greer can get angry about three new things before breakfast. And she'll never tap you on the shoulder to attract your attention if she can grab you by the lapels and hoist you against the wall. Getting angry has become such an instinctive part of her approach to the world that she can now say even very obvious or banal things (such as, "tea is often drunk with milk") as if she were revealing a great truth — and if we dunderheads refuse to acknowledge this important truth, then the world will go to hell in a handbasket ("For Chrissake, if women aren't being offered milk in their tea, then a helluva lot of women are simply not getting tea the way they like it. It's insanity!"). Don't bother arguing back. As wide as Greer's vocabulary is, "I take your point" is not a phrase she probably uses often.

Listen to her giving a lecture. She is explaining to her mostly female audience why sexual intercourse is not necessarily a mark of intimacy by comparing it to sticking her little finger up a man's nostril: to Greer, both acts represent the same degree of penetration ("You're not really inside them at all"). Now, either I'm doing something wrong, or there's actually quite a big difference between these two actions — and that's over and above what Greer's thesis might imply about people who pick their *own* nose in public.

Greer herself seems to be past penetration, past earth-shaking *orgasms (too exhausting, she says)* and, for all we know, past inserting her finger up men's nostrils, because she confessed that what she now likes doing best is thinking: "I'm very *keen on thinking.*" But what makes her stand out is that few people are willing then to bare their thoughts and passions so publicly, unconcerned about how batty others might find her.

The jacket designers of her new book had to bite their tongue when she rejected their prototypes in favour of a photograph we saw her taking on her kitchen table of a Philippine fertility amulet embedded in a raw steak (which she later ate), an image which she believed conveyed the meaty, bloody, fertility of womanhood. It would have been nice to know if this image also reminded David Beckham of his beloved Posh — provided, of course, we had enough time to hang around for his answer.

BBC1

6.00am Business Breakfast (89098)
7.00 BBC Breakfast News (T) (32017)
9.00 Kilroy (T) (2453291)
9.45 Wipeout (9391956)
10.10 The Vanessa Show (T) (7342630)
10.55 News; Weather (T) (3902017)
11.00 Change That (3912494)
11.25 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (T) (3982253)
11.55 News; Weather (T) (7860291)
12.00 Call My Bluff (29494)
12.30pm Top Tip Challenge (r) (4443949)
12.55 The Weather Show (T) (53587949)
1.00 One O'Clock News (T) (35104)
1.30 Regional News; Weather (59409524)
1.40 Neighbours Toadie is accused of poisoning Happy the dog (T) (35549982)
2.05 Ironside (r) (5760727)
3.25 Children's BBC: Playdays (6306524) **3.45** Little Monsters (5960123) **3.50** ChuckleVision (4301369) **4.10** See It, Saw It (5343678) **4.35** The Wild House (3980727) **5.00** Newsround (4645253) **5.10** Blue Peter (9332340)
5.35 Neighbours (r) (T) (934727)
6.00 Six O'Clock News; Weather (T) (659)
6.30 Regional News Magazine (611)
7.00 CHOICE Megalab '99 Peter Snow and Philippa Forrester encourage viewers to take part in the largest ever mass participation experiment (T) (3307)



Kate Winslet in a early episode of the long-running medical drama (8pm)

8.00 CHOICE Casualty 250: The Full Medical A celebration of Britain's longest-running medical drama, drawing on the experiences of those familiar with Holby City A&E (T) (267765)
8.50 The National Lottery: Greatest Hits Heaven 17 provide the music as Angela Griffin presents the draw (T) (524727)
9.00 Nine O'Clock News; Regional News; Weather (T) (8727) (8727)
9.30 Jasper Carrott: Back to the Front More *stand-up comedy (4/6) (T) (34814)*
10.00 CHOICE The X Files An attempt on the life of a psychic boy and a chance encounter with a woman from Mulder's past spark an investigation *which may finally unravel the mystery of* the X Files. Last in series (T) (780388)
10.50 Casualty 250 Poisonous gas floods the docks, and Baz realises that a friend may be responsible (r) (T) (734415)
11.40 Prelude to a Kiss (1992) FILM A mysterious old man causes a new bride to undergo a bizarre personality change. Romantic fantasy, with Meg Ryan and Alec Baldwin. Directed by Norman Rene (T) (406765)
1.20am Weather (1061234)
1.25 BBC News 24 *(35360895)*

WALES:

10.50 The Slate (985920) **11.20 Casualty 250** (r) (T) (441307) **12.10am FILM: Prelude to a Kiss** (T) (387857) **1.50 News** (T) (1204166) **1.55-6.00 BBC News 24** (34554352)

BBC2

7.00am Children's BBC Breakfast Show: Pingu (7371272) **7.05** Teletubbies (6831712) **7.30** Snorks (8233185) **7.50** The Really Wild Show (3341456) **8.18** Rewind (3782727) **8.20** Taz-Mania (5939746) ***8.40*** *Polka Dot Shorts* (1987494) **8.50** Pingu (1983678) **9.00** Images of Skye (7505494) **9.10** What? Where? When? Why? (7585630) **9.25** The Art (4243920) **9.45** Words and Pictures (8614630) **10.00** Teletubbies (12765) **10.30** Numbertime (9166104) **10.45** Watch (9161659) **11.00** Around Scotland (3182104) **11.20** The Geography Programme (3039104) **11.40** Science in Action (6410185) **12.00** Revista *(5135746) 12.15pm Hallo Aus Berlin* (4962388) **12.30** Working Lunch (45 920) **1.00** Brum (68806524)
1.10 War Walks (3/6) (r) (T) (41637920)
1.40 Hart-Davis on History (35560475)
2.10 Awash with Colour (56320524)
2.40 News; Weather (T) (3174814)
2.45 Westminster (T) (5849901)
3.50 News; Weather (T) (6026901)
3.55 Kaye Advice show (9359291)
4.25 Ready, Steady, Cook (T) (6045036)
4.55 Esther (T) (5020017)
5.30 Whose House? (388)
6.00 Star Trek: The Next Generation Picard is forced to confront a difficult episode from his past (r) (T) (863017)



Sarah Michelle Gellar stars as the high school heroine (6.45pm)

6.45 Buffy the Vampire Slayer Buffy comes to the aid of Cordelia, the school's most popular pupil (T) (267104)
7.30 Sophie Grigson's Herbs Tasty ideas for a salmon and dill burger (T) (765)
8.00 University Challenge (T) (5036)
8.30 Looking Good Stateside fashions, a bargain alternative to a facelift and a guide to applying mascara (T) (4543)
9.00 CHOICE Modern Times: Diana's Neighbours Report on why angry London residents are opposing plans to build a memorial garden commemorating the life of Diana, Princess of Wales (T) (775920)
9.50 Trouble at the Top A £12million project to transform a dilapidated mansion into London's first five-star club (T) (512814)
10.30 Newsnight (T) (636253)
11.13 Video Nation Shorts (T) (100678)
11.15 A *Living Hell* The family of a suicide victim describe the reality of living with a manic depressive (3/3) (710949)
11.55 Weather (976833)
12.00 Despatch Box (60895)
12.30am BBC Learning Zone: Open University Rocky Shores **1.00** Tropical Forest **1.30** Managing for Biodiversity. Forests in Trinidad **2.00** Schools: Science **4.00** Languages Make German Your Business **5.00** RCN Nursing Updates **5.45** Open University. Body Plans **6.10** Insect Diversity **6.35** Molluscs, Mechanisms and Minds

HTV

5.30am ITV Morning News (25388)
6.00 GMTV (5624949)
9.25 Trisha (T) (8856678)
10.30 This Morning (T) (44461272)
12.15pm HTV News and Weather (T) (4959814)
12.30 ITV Lunchtime News; Weather (T) (4438017)
12.55 Shortland Street Nick falls on his feet (9865727)
1.30 Home and Away Kaia leaves Summer Bay (T) (35578494)
1.55 The Jerry Springer Show Outrageous talk show from America (T) (3583758)
2.40 Wheel of Fortune (T) (1811366)
3.10 ITV News Headlines (T) (4693611)
3.15 HTV News (T) (4692982)
3.20 CITV: Mopatop's Shop (4613475) **3.30** Teddybears (9673388) **3.40** Jumanji (9334982) **4.05** Hey Arnold! (6019611) **4.35** Wildtrack (3908123)
5.00 Home and Away Kaia leaves Summer Bay (r) (T) (3678)
5.30 WEST: Live and Local Richard Wyatt, Polly Lloyd and Simon Whitby report from a family-run farm on Exmoor (814)
5.30 WALES: Up Beat (2/6) (T) (814)
5.58 HTV Weather (706494)
5.59 HTV Crimestoppers (706494)
6.00 HTV News (T) (727)
6.30 ITV Evening News; Weather (T) (307)
7.00 Coronation Street Nick and Leanne reveal their news (T) (3814)



Dwight Yorke will be looking to add to United's two goal lead (7.30pm)

7.30 The Big Match — Live! Internazionale v Manchester United (kick-off 7.45pm). Bob Wilson introduces full coverage of *this vital European Cup quarter-final* second leg at the San Siro in Milan. Subsequent programmes are subject to change (T) (681185)
10.00 Birth Race 2000: On Your Marks Introduction for couples planning a Millennium baby (794098)
10.05 Foul Play Cheating in the sports world (T) (420494)
11.00 ITV Nightly News; Weather (T) (687017)
11.20 HTV News and Weather (T) (572746)
11.30 The Big Match Highlights of tonight's second legs of the European Cup quarter-finals (362036)
12.35am A Taste for Killing (1992) FILM Two spoilt graduates working on an oil rig find their *only friend has an ulterior motive for* helping them. Thriller, starring Michael Biehn. Directed by Lou Antonio (796876)
2.10 The Big Match Dynamo Kiev v Real Madrid (820234)
3.50 ITV Sport Classics (95203924)
4.20 The Making of Ever After: A Cinderella Story Behind the scenes of the romance, starring Drew Barrymore (r) (73493079)
4.50 ITV Nightscreen Behind the scenes of ITV programmes (43869789)
5.00 Coronation Street (r) (T) (68234)

CENTRAL

As HTV West except:
12.20-12.30pm Central News; Weather (7197982)
12.55 Home and Away (4446036)
1.25 The Jerry Springer Show *(4001630)*
2.10-2.40 Echo Point *(56357678)*
3.15-3.20 Central News; Weather (4692982)
5.30 Shortland Street (814)
6.00-6.30 Central News at Six; Weather (727)
11.20-11.30 Central News; Weather (572746)
3.55am Central Jobfinder '99 (5442673)
5.20-5.30 Asian Eye (3244166)

WESTCOUNTRY

As HTV West except:
12.15-12.27pm Westcountry News; Weather (4959814)
12.27-12.30 Illuminations (7105901)
12.55-1.25 Westcountry Lunchtime Live (4446036)
1.25 The Jerry Springer Show (4001630)
2.10-2.40 Home and Away (56357678)
3.15-3.20 Westcountry News; Weather (4692982)
4.59-5.00 Birthday People (7708833)
5.30 Peter Gorton for Starters (814)
6.00-6.30 Westcountry Live; Weather (727)
11.20-11.30 Westcountry News; Weather (572746)

MERIDIAN

As HTV West except: **12.15pm-12.30 Meridian News;** Weather (4959814) **5.30 Country Vets** (5/6) (r) (814) **6.00-6.30 Meridian Tonight** (T) (727) ***7.29-7.30 Meridian Weather*** (610543) **11.20-11.30 Meridian News;** Weather (T) (572746) **5.00am-5.30 Freescreen** (T) (68234)

ANGLIA

As HTV West except: **12.19pm Anglia Air Watch** (7116017) **12.20-12.30 Anglia News and Weather** (7197982) **5.30 Whipsnade** (8/13) (T) (814) **5.59 Anglia Weather** (T) (706494) **6.00-6.30 Anglia News** (T) (727) ***11.19 Anglia Air Watch*** *(196475) **11.20-11.30*** **Anglia News and Weather** (T) (572746)

S4C

Starts: ***6.00am Sesame Street*** *(r) (88739524)* **7.00 The Big Breakfast** (67782253) **9.00 Ysgolion:** The Mix (97933765) **9.30 Rat-A-Tat-Tat** (74970949) **9.45 Book Box** (74968104) **10.00 Stage Two Science** (91723388) **10.15 All About Us** (91706611) **10.30 The French Programme** (51434272) **10.50 Stop, Look, Listen** (85365271) **11.00 Yr Amgylchedd** (15879920) **11.15 Tackling Technology** (15869543) **11.30 Powerhouse** (T) (68134833) **12.00 Sesame Street** (T) (97913901) **12.30pm *Planed Plant*** (T) (26748746) **1.00 The Afternoon Line** (67785340) **1.30 The Cheltenham Festival** (64912833) **4.30 Dishes** (T) (67026543) **5.00 Planed Plant** (T) (90018369) **5.30 Countdown** (T) (67040123) **6.00 Newyddion 6** (T) (93366456) **6.10 Heno** (T) (86856659) **7.00 Pobol y Cwm** (T) (90021833) **7.30 Newyddion** (T) (67027272) **8.00 Ffermio** (T) (90007253) **8.30 Hawlio** (T) (90026388) **9.00 ER** (T) (37278494) **10.00 Brookside** (T) (72583746) ***10.35 Sex and the City*** *(T) (35688949)* **11.05 The 11 O'Clock Show** (88394746) **11.35 Michael Moore: The Awful Truth** (T) (92167611) **12.05am The Cheltenham Festival** (69118654) **12.40 boardstupid goes skiing** (43957418) **1.45 Football Italia: Mezzanotte** (25927876) **4.05 Trans World Sport** (40081857) **5.10 Diwedd**

CHANNEL 4

6.00am Sesame Street (r) (28956)
7.00 The Big Breakfast (25727)
9.00 Schools: The Mix (92340) **9.30** Rat-A-Tat-Tat (8611543) **9.45** Book Box (8616098) **10.00** Stage Two Science *(9623036) 10.15 All About Us (9813659)* **10.30** French Programme: Channel Hopping (1460982) **10.50** Stop, Look, Listen (8730253) **11.00** First Edition (3020456) **11.15** Tackling Technology (3043307)
11.30 Powerhouse (T) (5630)
12.00 Sesame Street (T) (12104)
12.30pm Bewitched (r) (T) (47388)
1.00 The Afternoon Line Racing tips (28814)
1.30 The Cheltenham Festival Brough Scott introduces live coverage of the **2.00** Royal & SunAlliance Novices' Hurdle, **2.35** Queen Mother Champion Chase, **3.15** Coral Cup Hurdle and the **3.55** Royal & SunAlliance Chase (197456)
4.30 Countdown (T) (3907494)
4.55 Ricki Lake (T) (5015185)
5.30 Pet Rescue Presented by Wendy Turner and Mark Evans (T) (456)
6.00 Dawson's Creek Joey and Dawson's newfound romance looks set to founder *as an infringement of privacy and* subsequent revelations open a rift between the teenage lovers. Pacey's forgotten birthday inspires him to expand his horizons (T) (872765)
6.50 T4orce Highlights from last week's T4 programmes (T) (274630)
7.00 Channel 4 News; Weather (T) (168494)
7.55 Bodyscapes Close-up photography reveals the hidden world of the human tongue (T) (644433)
8.00 Brookside A saboteur strikes at the Millennium Club (T) (3384)
8.30 Doors to Manual Danny O'Brien welcomes three groups of tourists to Rome, and reveals what sort of weekend they will experience, including a football fan's dream holiday (3/6) (T) (9611)



Alex Kingston stars as the under-pressure Dr Elizabeth Corday (9pm)

9.00 ER An exhausting 36-hour shift ends in near-disaster when Corday mistakenly administers a potentially fatal injection. Greene suffers a humiliating initiation ceremony and a star candidate applies for the role of ER chief (T) (5901)
10.00 Sex and the City Charlotte considers a menage a trois (T) (13833)
10.30 Michael Moore: The Awful Truth Subversive reports *(T) (99253)*
11.00 The 11 O'Clock Show Satirical comedy with Iain Lee and Daisy Donovan (6982)
11.30 The Cheltenham Festival Highlights and analysis (78997)
12.00 So Graham Norton (r) (7369676)
12.40am boardstupid Snowboarding news (r) (9126654)
1.45 Football Italia: Mezzanotte Round-up of the week's action (38617031)
4.05 Trans World Sport (6876234)
5.10 Soviet Echoes Profiles of great Soviet musicians (1/3) (r) (6687505)

CHANNEL 5

6.00am 5 News and Sport With Becky Anderson (4458974)
7.00 WideWorld Part 19. Singing lessons for all (r) (T) (8898307)
7.30 Milkshake! (2313833)
7.35 Wimzie's House *(r) (4392562)*
8.00 Havakazoo (r) (2515185)
8.30 Dappledown Farm (r) (2514456)
9.00 Hot Property (r) (T) (9515663)
9.25 Russell Grant's Postcards (r) (4165456)
9.35 The Oprah Winfrey Show (r) (1235384)
10.25 Sunset Beach Cole finds Caitlin in the alley (T) (2378320)
11.10 Leeza (1014235)
12.00 5 News at Noon *(T) (2518272)*
12.30pm Family Affairs Siobhan returns to Charnham (r) (T) (1996494)
1.00 The Bold and the Beautiful Jessica questions Sly (T) (8897678)
1.30 The Roseanne Show Outrageous chat with the bubbly comedian (1995765)
2.00 100 Per Cent Gold (r) (9874494)
2.30 Good Afternoon Daily entertainment; 5 News Update (1472982)
3.30 From Hollywood to Deadwood (1990) FILM Detective spoof, starring Scott Paulin and Jim Haynie as California private eyes hired by a movie company to track down a missing leading lady. Directed by Rex Pickett (3845479)
5.20 5 News (16197253)
5.25 Russell Grant's Postcards Hounslow Heath, Middlesex (17547794)
5.30 100 Per Cent (r) (2111562)
6.00 5 News; Weather Round-up of the day's stories (T) (2118475)
6.30 Family Affairs Pete plans to get his own back on Dave (T) (2109727)
7.00 Knight Rider Adventure series, starring David Hasselhoff as Michael Knight, a hi-tech vigilante battling to protect the innocent from crooks who reckon they're above the law — with the help of his talking car, of course (r) (9845982)
7.30 Nature of Oz Revealing portrait of Australia's extraordinary leafy sea dragon, which lives under threat from man's destructive activities (T); 5 News Update (2198611)
8.00 Chances Are (1989) FILM A widow is pleasantly surprised to discover her late, lamented lawyer husband has been reincarnated in the body of a much younger man. Romantic supernatural comedy, starring Cybill Shepherd, Ryan O'Neal, Robert Downey Jr and Mary *Stuart Masterson. Directed by* Emile Ardolino (T); 5 News Update (8210017)
10.00 Zero Tolerance (1994) FILM An FBI agent turns renegade to exact revenge on the Mexican drug cartel responsible for murdering his family. Violent crime drama, starring Robert Patrick. Directed by Joseph Merhi (T) (7348524)
11.45 Melinda's Big Night In With Chaka Khan and Ross Burden (8689036)
12.25am UK Raw A glamour model freezes her wrinkles (5/10) (9761963)
12.55 Live NHL Ice Hockey Live coverage of Phoenix Coyotes v Detroit Red Wings (85622506)
4.40 The Movie Chart Show *(r) (92951437)*
5.05 Move On Up (r) (32773789)
5.30 100 Per Cent (r) (8573741)

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SATELLITE, CABLE AND DIGITAL

● **For further listings see Saturday's *Vision***

SKY ONE

7.00am Count Duckula (61543) **7.30** The Chris Evans Breakfast Show (24814) **8.30** Hollywood Squares (34340) **9.00** Sally Jessy Raphael (51727) **10.00** The Oprah Winfrey Show (75562) **11.00** Guilty! (66098) **12.00** Jenny Jones (62475) **1.00pm** Mad About You (60914) **1.30** Jeopardy (63611) **2.00** Sally Jessy Raphael (40562) **3.00** Jenny Jones (94433) **4.00** Guilty! (83630) **5.00** Star Trek: Voyager (6307) **6.00** America's Dumbest Criminals (4681) **6.30** Friends (4291) **7.00** The Simpsons (7036) **7.30** The Simpsons (4825) **8.00** Mortal Kombat Conquest (91384) **9.00** The X Files (21388) **10.00** Miami Uncovered (24475) **11.00** Friends (91659) **11.30** Star Trek: Voyager (56494) **12.30am** The Commish (16944) **1.30** Long Play (4459423)

SKY BOX OFFICE

Sky's pay-per-view movie channels. To view any film telephone 0990 800888
SKY BOX OFFICE 1 (Transponder 51)
Fallen (1998)
SKY BOX OFFICE 2 (Transponder 60)
Amistad (1997)
SKY BOX OFFICE 3 (Transponder 59)
Flubber (1997)
Starship Troopers (1997)
SKY BOX OFFICE 4 (Transponder 58)
Butcher Boy (1997)

SKY PREMIER

6.00am About Sarah (1998) (86611) **8.00 Three Wishes (1995)** (39456) **10.00 Turbo: A Power Rangers Movie (1997)** (73098) **12.00 About Sarah (1998)** (52307) **2.00pm Shaughnessy (1996)** (275185) **3.45 Turbo: A Power Rangers Movie (1997)** (964794) **5.45 Warriors of Virtue (1997)** (16021889) **7.30** Barry Norman's *Film Night* (3185) **8.00 Jerry Maguire (1996)** (19965833) **10.20 Fargo (1996)** (902104) **12.00 The Color Purple (1985)** (91502447) **2.35am Michael Collins (1996)** (32037050)

SKY MOVIEMAX

7.00am Movie Magic: Cities Under Siege (56611) **7.30** Femmes Fatales: Meryl Streep (1372678) **8.15** Action Heroes: Val Kilmer (2097456) **9.00 Options (1988)** (51678) **11.00 Take Your Best Shot (1989)** (28562) **1.00** Movie Magic: Cities Under Siege (55982) **1.30** Femmes Fatales: Meryl Streep (5443920) **2.15** Action Heroes: Val Kilmer (7589611) **3.00 Options (1988)** (27982) **5.00 Take Your Best Shot (1989)** (51017) **7.00 Wing and a Prayer (TVM 1998)** (24307) **8.30** E! News Week in Review (7659) **9.00 Romy and Michele's High School Reunion (1997)** (39307) **11.00 Medusa's Child — Part One (1997)** (251017) **12.35am In My Sister's Shadow (1997)** (345160) **2.10 The Cure (1997)** (462234) **3.50 Until September (1984)** (994470)

SKY CINEMA

4.00pm Cleopatra (1963) (5876765) **8.00 The Little Shop of Horrors (1986)** (25033631) **10.00 Terms of Endearment (1983)** (80013185) **12.15am Dirty Mary, Crazy Larry (1974)** (4416470) **1.50 Shanghai Triad (1995)** (4911215) **3.40 Zorba the Greek (1964)** (20650925)

FILMFOUR

6.00pm Babette's Feast (1987) (4323098) **8.00 Eat Drink Man Woman *(1994)*** *(13102349)* ***10.10 Delicatessen*** **(1990)** (3996678) **11.45** Fridge (5152553) **12.00 A Private Function (1984)** (6457437) **1.45am The Vanishing (1988)** (6382693) **3.30 Close My Eyes (1991)** (4412499) **6.00** Close

TNT

9.00pm Mildred Pierce (1945) (53129543) **11.15 The Wings of Eagles (1957)** (74022765) **1.15am Zigzag (1970)** (31263128) **3.15 Cool Breeze (1972)** (13796760) **5.00** Close

SKY SPORTS 1

7.00am Sports Centre **7.15** World Wrestling Federation: Live Wire **8.15** You're On Sky Sports! **9.00** Racing News **9.30** Aerobics Oz Style **10.00** Inside Scottish Football ***11.00*** *Table Tennis* ***12.00*** *Aerobics Oz* Style **12.30pm** FA Cup Football **2.00** Inside Scottish Football **3.00** Snowboarding **3.30** Fastrax **4.00** Watersports World **5.00** World Wrestling Federation: Shotgun **6.00** Sports Centre **6.30** Unbelievable Sports **7.00** World Pool League **8.00** Rugby League World **9.30** Unbelievable Sports **10.00** Sports Centre **10.15** You're On Sky Sports! **11.00** World Pool League **12.00** Sports Centre **12.15am** You're On Sky Sports! **1.00** Rugby League World **2.30** World Pool League **3.30** Sports Centre **3.45** Close

SKY SPORTS 2

7.00am Aerobics Oz Style **7.30** Sports Centre **7.45** Racing News **8.15** Fastrax **8.45** Sports Centre **9.00** Fish TV **10.00** Premier Snooker League **12.00** Golf Extra ***3.00pm*** *Live International Cricket* ***10.00*** Table Tennis **11.00** Australian Rally Championship **11.30** European Tour Golf Weekly **12.00** Golf Extra **3.00am** Sports Centre **3.15** Close

SKY SPORTS 3

12.00am *World Wrestling Federation:* Shotgun **1.00pm** Fish TV **2.00** Boxing Superbouts **3.00** The Entertainers **3.30** Premier Snooker League **5.30** European Tour Golf Weekly **6.00** Table Tennis **7.00** Golf Extra **10.00** FA Cup Final Classics **11.30** Close

EUROSPORT

7.30am Snowboarding **8.00** Cart **9.30** Football **12.30pm** Adventure **1.00** Tennis **1.30** Snooker **3.00** Bowling **4.00** Football **6.00** Start Your Engines **7.00** Tractor Pulling **8.00** Strongman **9.00** Darts **10.00** Boxing **11.00** Start Your Engines **12.00** Adventure **12.30am** Close

UK GOLD

7.00am Crossroads **7.30** Neighbours **7.55** EastEnders **8.30** The Bill **9.00** The Bill **9.30** *Pride and Prejudice* **10.30** Rhoda **11.00** Dallas **11.55** Neighbours **12.25pm** EastEnders **1.00** Bugs **2.00** Dallas **2.55** The Bill **3.25** The Bill **3.55** EastEnders **4.30** Rhoda **5.00** All Creatures Great and Small **6.00** Dynasty **7.00** Ever Decreasing Circles **7.40** Dad's Army **8.20** The Brittas Empire ***9.00*** *Men Behaving Badly* ***9.40*** *Men* Behaving Badly **10.20** Men Behaving Badly **11.00** Only Fools and Horses **12.25am** The Bill **12.55** The Bill **1.25** French and Saunders **2.00** Dangerfield **3.00** Shopping with Screenshop

GRANADA PLUS

6.00am Within These Walls **7.00** Holding the Fort **7.30** The Odd Couple **8.00** Hallelujah **8.30** The Many Wives of Patrick **9.00** Classic Coronation Street **9.30** Emmerdale Farm **10.00** Upstairs, Downstairs ***11.00*** *Gentle Touch* ***12.00*** *Classic* Coronation Street **12.30pm** Emmerdale Farm **1.00** The Many Wives of Patrick **1.30** Me and My Girl **2.00** Upstairs, Downstairs **3.00** The Love Boat **4.00** The Professionals **5.00** Hart to Hart **6.00** Emmerdale Farm **6.30** Classic Coronation Street **7.00** The Professionals **8.00** The Benny Hill Show **9.00** The Sweeney **10.00** *Hale and Pace* **10.30** Wheeltappers and Shunters' Social Club **11.00** Men and Motors



Djimon Hounsou (centre) stars as a slave who leads a mutiny in Stephen Spielberg's epic drama *Amistad* (Sky Box Office 2)

CARLTON SELECT

5.00pm What's Cooking? **5.30** Gridlock ***6.00*** *My Two Wives* ***6.30*** *Our House* **7.00** Shine On Harvey Moon **8.00** Men of the World **8.30** Superchefs **9.00** Head Over Heels **10.00** Pie in the Sky **11.00** Hill Street Blues **12.00** My Two Wives **12.30am** Gridlock **1.00** Close

DISNEY CHANNEL

6.00am Gummi Bears **6.25** Classic Toons **6.35** Tale Spin **7.00** Classic Toons **7.10** Aladdin **7.35** 101 Dalmatians **8.00** Goof Troop **8.25** Classic Toons **8.45** New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh **9.00** The *Adventures of Spot* ***9.05*** *Animal Shelf* ***9.15*** Pocket Dragons **9.30** Bear in the Big Blue House **9.55** The Toothbrush Family **10.00** Bite Size **10.10** Rosie and Jim **10.30** The Big Garage **10.45** PB and J Otter **11.00** Sesame Street **12.00** The Adventures of Spot **12.05pm** Animal Shelf **12.15** Pocket Dragons **12.30** Bear in the Big Blue House ***12.55*** *The Toothbrush Family* ***1.00*** *Bite Size* **1.10** Rosie and Jim **1.30** The Big Garage **1.45** PB and J Otter **2.00** New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh **2.30** Quack Pack **3.00** The Little Mermaid **3.30** Art Attack **4.00** 101 Dalmatians **4.30** Hercules: The TV Show **5.00** Recess **5.15** Pepper Ann **5.30** Smart Guy **6.00** Teen Angel **6.30** Boy Meets World **7.00 FILM: The Gnome Mobile (1967)** **8.25** Honey I Shrunk the Kids: The TV Show **9.10** Dinosaurs **10.00** Home Improvement **10.30** The Wonder Years **11.00** Touched by an Angel **12.00** Close

FOX KIDS NETWORK

6.00am Adventures of Dodo **6.05** Power Rangers Turbo **6.30** Power Rangers Turbo **6.55** Spiderman **7.20** Oggy and the Cockroaches **7.30** Donkey Kong Country ***8.00*** *Hero Turtles: The Next Mutation* ***8.25*** The Incredible Hulk **8.50** Iron Man **9.15** Fantastic Four **9.40** X-Men **10.05** Casper **10.30** Oggy and the Cockroaches **10.55** EekIStravaganza **11.05** Bobby's World **11.30** Life with Louie **11.55** Home to Rent **12.05pm** Dennis and Gnasher **12.30** Donkey Kong Country **1.00** Mowgli: The *New Adventures of Jungle Book* ***1.25*** *Ace* Ventura **1.55** The Incredible Hulk **2.20** Iron *Man* ***2.45*** *Fantastic Four* ***3.10*** *X-Men* **3.30** X-Press **3.35** Spiderman **4.00** Goosebumps ***4.25*** *Hero Turtles: The Next Mutation* **4.50** Casper **5.00** Dennis and Gnasher **5.30** Ace Ventura **6.00** Donkey Kong Country **6.30** EekIStravaganza **6.55** Oggy and the Cockroaches **7.00** Close

NICKELODEON

6.00am Rocko's Modern Life **6.30** Bruno the Kid **7.00** CatDog **7.30** Rugrats **8.00** The Wild Thornberrys **8.30** Arthur **9.00** Children's BBC **10.00** Wimzie's House **10.30** Papa Beaver Stories **11.00** The Magic School Bus **11.30** PB Bear/Budgie the Little Helicopter/Animal Antics/Family Ness **12.00** Rugrats **12.30pm** Blue's Clues **1.00** Bananas in Pyjamas **1.30** Little Bear Stories **2.00** Paddington Bear/Lizzie's Library/Portland Bill/Mr Men **2.30** Children's BBC **3.00** Children's BBC **3.30** Doug **4.00** Three Friends and Jerry **4.30** Rugrats **5.00** Sister Sister **5.30** Kenan and Kel **6.00** Renford Rejects **6.30** Moesha **7.00** Close

BRAVO

8.00pm Martial Law **9.00** Extreme Championship Wrestling **9.30** Cops **10.00** Late Lounge **10.30** Erotic Confessions **11.00** ***FILM: Adventures of a Plumber's Mate*** **(1978)** **1.00am** Erotic Confessions **1.30** Late Lounge **2.00** Martial Law **3.00 FILM: Red Heat (1988)** **5.00** Extreme Championship Wrestling **5.30** *Cops* ***6.00*** *Close*

PARAMOUNT COMEDY

7.00pm Jenny **7.30** Grace Under Fire **8.00** Ellen **8.30** Spin City **9.00** Drop the Dead Donkey **9.30** Whose Line Is It Anyway? **10.00** Frasier **10.30** Cheers **11.00** Seinfeld **11.30** The Larry Sanders Show **12.00** Late Night with David Letterman **1.00am** Taxi ***1.30*** *Frontline* ***2.00*** *Dr Katz* ***2.30*** *Tibs and* Fibs **3.00** Nightstand **3.30** Abbott and Costello **4.00** Close

THE SCI-FI CHANNEL

SATELLITE: 8pm-MIDNIGHT ONLY

7.30am *Bloomberg Information Television* **8.00** Sightings Special **9.00** Battlestar Galactica **10.00** Quantum Leap **11.00** Dark Shadows **11.30** The Ray Bradbury Theatre **12.00** The Twilight Zone **1.00pm** Tales of the Unexpected **1.30** Tales of the Unexpected **2.00** Amazing Stories **2.30** Mysteries, Magic and Miracles **3.00** Battlestar Galactica **4.00** *Incredible Hulk* **5.00** Sightings Special **6.00** Time Trax **7.00** Quantum Leap **8.00** VR.5 **9.00** Lexx **10.00** **FILM: Tank Girl (1994)** **12.00** PSI Factor *Chronicles of the Paranormal* **1.00am** **FILM: Downdraft (1996)** **3.00** Dark Shadows **3.30** Dark Shadows **4.00** Close

HOME & LEISURE

6.00am Today's Gourmet **6.30** Yan Can Cook — The Best of Asia **7.00** Homemaker **7.30** Period Rooms **8.00** Wedding Story **8.30** A Baby Story **9.00** Simply Painting **9.30** The Great Gardening Plot **10.00** Instant Gardens **10.30** Two's Country Cooking **11.00** The Dicemen **11.25** The Home and Leisure House **11.30** Rex Hunt Fishing Adventures **12.00** Our House Down Under **12.30pm** Antiques Trail **1.00** Our House **1.30** Home Savvy **2.00** New Yankee Workshop **2.30** Home Again with Bob Vila **3.00** This Old House with Steve and Norm **3.30** Charlie West Fishing

DISCOVERY

4.00pm Rex Hunt Fishing Adventures **4.30** The Car Show **5.00** Hitler **6.00** Wildlife SOS **6.30** Untamed Africa **7.30** Futureworld **8.00** Arthur C Clarke's Mysterious Universe **8.30** Creatures Fantastic **9.00** History's Mysteries **9.30** History's Mysteries **10.00** Mysteries of the Ancient Ones **11.00** The Pacific War **12.00** The Great Egyptians **1.00am** Hitler **2.00** Close

ANIMAL PLANET

12.00am The New Adventures of Black Beauty **12.30pm** Hollywood Safari **1.30** *Crocodile Hunter* **2.00** *All-Bird TV* **2.30** Human/Nature **3.30** Harry's Practice **4.00** Jack Hanna's Animal Adventures **4.30** Animal Doctor **5.00** Pet Rescue **5.30** Crocodile Hunters **6.00** New Adventures of Black Beauty **6.30** Lassie **7.00** Rediscovery *of the World* **8.00** Animal Doctor **8.30** Horse Tales **9.00** Going Wild **9.30** Emergency Vets **10.00** Crocodile Hunter **10.30** Crocodile Hunter **11.00** Wildlife ER **11.30** Emergency Vets **12.00** Close

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

7.00pm Return of the Lynx **7.30** The Eagle and the Snake **8.00** Forgotten Apes **9.00** The Tribe That Time Forgot **10.00** Mummies of the Takla Makan **11.00** On the Edge: Return to Everest **12.00** Extreme Earth: Journey to the Bottom of the World

HISTORY

4.00pm Vietnam: Tet **5.00** Classic Cars 1955 Chevrolet **6.00** Maya: The Blood of Kings **7.00** Sidney Poitier

CARLTON FOOD

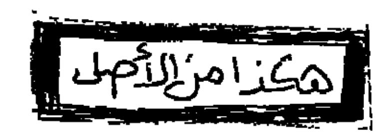
9.00am Food Network Daily **9.30** Coxon's Kitchen College **10.00** From the Ground Up **10.30** First Taste **11.00** Worrall Thompson Cooks **11.30** A Slice of the Action **12.00** Food Network Daily **12.30pm** Scotland's Larder **1.00** Coxon's Kitchen College **1.30** The Cookshop **2.00** Mridula's Indian Kitchen **2.30** Food Network Daily **3.00** Loyd's Louisiana **3.30** A Slice of the Action **4.00** Thoroughly Modern British **4.30** Chez Bruno **5.00** Close

LIVING

6.00am Tiny and Crew **6.20** Ten Plus Two **6.40** Philbert the Frog **6.45** Greedysaurus and the Gang **6.50** Polka Dot Shorts **7.00** Practical Parenting **7.05** Professor Bubble **7.30** Caillou **7.35** Bug Alert **7.55** Practical Parenting **8.00** Barney and Friends **8.25** Babaloos **8.30** Tiny Tales **8.35** Tiny and Crew **8.50** Practical Parenting **9.00** Special Babies **9.30** The Roseanne Show **10.00** The Jerry Springer Show **10.50** Maury Povich **11.40** Brookside **12.10pm** Through the Keyhole **12.40** Rescue 911 **1.10** Beyond Belief: Fact or Fiction **1.40** Maury Povich **2.30** Special Babies **3.00** Living Room **3.50** Michael Cole **4.40** Through the Keyhole **5.10** The Heat Is On **5.40** Ready, Steady, Cook **6.15** The Jerry Springer Show **7.05** Rescue 911 **7.35** Animal Rescue **8.00** Adrenalin Junkies **9.00 FILM: Recipe for *Revenge*** ***11.00*** *The Sex Files II* ***12.00*** Close

ZEE TV

5.00am Lolly Pop **5.30** Hey Ha Ho **6.00** Out and About **6.30** Yoodle-Ae-Oo **7.00** Faith *Christian* ***7.30*** *News* ***8.00*** *India Business* Report **8.30** Tara **9.00** Rishtey: The Love Stories **10.00** Sofia **11.00** Aashiana **11.30** Parampara **12.00 FILM: Ba Mibaal** **3.00pm** Zee Bangla **3.30** Hum Paanch **4.00** Akbar Birbal **4.30** Ek Minute **5.00** Jungle Book **5.30** Mausam **6.00** Top of the Tops **6.30** Banegi Apni Baat **7.00** Baat Ban Jaye **7.30** It's My Choice **8.00** News **8.30** Amanat **9.00** Kaun Sa Rishta Kya Hai **10.00** Ikke Pe Ikka **10.30** Woh **11.00** Purukshetra **12.00** News **12.30am** Yehi Hai Zindagi **1.00** Zee Bangla **1.30** Parmartan **Narsayo**





Lightning strikes twice as brilliant Irish champion takes opening-day Festival honours

Istabraq hurdles into the realms of greatness

BY ALAN LEE, RACING CORRESPONDENT

THE race was over in the time that it takes to change gear in a car or to shake the reins of a horse. In that seminal moment, as Charlie Swan asked a searching question and Istabraq gave a breathtaking response, the doubts were silenced, months of speculation seemed foolish and the stature of one of the greatest hurdlers was established.

They were approaching the final turn in the Smurfit Champion Hurdle, Cheltenham's daunting hill ahead, when Swan engaged the weapon he knew that the rest could not counter. Overdrive. As Istabraq quickened, the roar from the 45,000 crowd drowned out all but the conviction of the jockey in front. "When I kicked, I thought nothing will go past us now," Swan said.

Nothing, in fact, came close. Istabraq crossed the final flight in glorious isolation and though the eventual margin was 3½ lengths, compared with 12 over the same runner-up, Theatreworld, last year, only the most grudging, sceptical soul would suggest that this is a horse past his best.

Swan had no cause to get serious with his horse; indeed, he had plenty of time to perfect his victory salute. The proximity of Theatreworld, his *bridesmaid of a stablemate* finishing second for the third successive year, was deceptive. And in the sunlit winner's enclosure, as a section of the crowd sang a self-composed ode to the champion, nobody cared anyway.

Cheltenham 99 Festival

Istabraq — an Arabic word meaning to run like lightning — fulfils the bold confidence of *his naming. He is the first* horse to retain the hurdling title since See You Then in 1986 and few doubt that he can further emulate that horse by *completing the hat-trick next* year. Coral and the Tote last night offered only 6-4 against it, though such odds will not look so cramped if he makes it back next March.

He is so clearly a class above his generation that this race had intrigued not in the usual anticipatory skirmish of what might win but over whether anything could possibly beat the odds-on favourite. Other, perhaps, than himself.

Swan and Aidan O'Brien, analysts both, had searched for weaknesses. At 29, O'Brien still looks like a sixth-former let out of school for the day, but his waif-like innocence no longer deceives. A training phenomenon, he mused the other day that Istabraq may even have too much speed now, so that the trip could be beyond him. He was happy to be proved wrong, even if the slack early pace assuredly helped.

Swan's concerns were that Istabraq should not boil over in the preliminaries, as he did before winning at Cheltenham as a novice, and that the bravery of his jumping should not bring him down. The horse did sweat freely, but on such a day he was not alone in that, and he jumped impeccably other than fiddling the last two. "If he'd jumped them better we'd have won even easier," Swan said. "I didn't want to hit the front so soon, but I really had no choice. He has such speed now."

French Holly was far from disgraced in third, making a race of it until that last turn. He was overhauled by Theatreworld on the run to the line and Ferdy Murphy, his trainer, said: "The way we rode him may have cost us second place." These, though, are very different horses. The giant French Holly may now become a star over fences, but Istabraq will never venture beyond the smaller obstacles. At 7, there is neither cause nor temptation to think of change, let alone rest or retirement.

As with all great horses, especially Irish ones, he touches the lives of many. J. P. McManus, his charismatic owner, said: "What Istabraq is doing controls how many of us run our lives — myself, my family and friends, but others, too. People want to know his plans before they book their holidays." McManus had not backed Istabraq — "at those odds it wouldn't have made me feel any better" — but he did admit to being a financial casualty of his two heavily backed runners in the opening Citroën Supreme Novices Hurdle. Now, though, he was feeling no pain.

Owner and trainer will take time to debate plans, but the indication is that Istabraq may run next at Punchestown rather than at Aintree, the scene of his only defeat in his past 16 races. Wherever he goes, Swan will go with him, now until their mutual retirement. "I'll be back next year and for a fourth and fifth year if it happens," he said. "So long as he is here, I will go on riding."

RESULT

1, **Istabraq**		4-9 fav
2, **Theatreworld**		16-1
3, **French Holly**		11-2
4, **Mister Morose**		100-1

HUGH ROUTLEDGE



Swan leads Istabraq through the adoring Cheltenham throng into the winner's enclosure after their emphatic triumph

Tears flow as Pitman calls it a day

BY ALAN LEE

EMOTIONAL scenes are commonplace in the winner's enclosure at Cheltenham but the tears do not often flow before a race has been run. Yesterday was different. The Festival crowd was enjoying the spring sunshine, an hour before the off, when Jenny Pitman arrived at the microphone to announce her retirement.

She was dressed in scarlet because, she said, she felt so pale, but it quickly seemed that black would have been more appropriate to the mood she would create. After two introductory comments she choked on her words. "This will be my last Cheltenham as a professional trainer," she managed to say, whereupon the thousands on the terracing around the parade ring burst into prolonged, spontaneous applause.

Retirements need not be sad but they are invariably emotional. The farewell of Mrs J. Pitman, OBE, of Upper Lambourn, was a rival to that of Mr H. D. Bird, of Barnsley, in the white handerchief stakes.

Pitman, 52, had somehow kept her decision secret and the impact was all the greater for that. The first lady of training, who numbers two Gold Cup and two Grand National winners on her glittering CV, had chosen her own way of an*nouncing the end and, once* she had rediscovered the power of speech, she did so with characteristic eloquence.

Her Weathercock House yard will be taken over by her son, Mark, who himself was close to tears as his mother explained the bombshell, starting with a reassurance. Only last year, she was having treatment for thyroid cancer but she insisted yesterday: "I'm not ill, so don't think there is bad news following this.

"I am not going for any reason other than it's the right thing to do. Mark has outgrown his own yard, so this is for him. I've loved my job, that is the difficulty. I signed some papers at breakfast-time this morning, handing over the yard to Mark, and I think I had to do it then or I'd have bottled out. I started crying at six this morning and I hoped I would have stopped by now."

The farmer's daughter from Leicestershire has never denied that she is kinder to horses than humans and her brusque manner with those unwise enough to cross her contrasts with the passionate attachment to every inmate of her stables.

There have been plenty of *good ones since* she moved into Lambourn in 1977, after the end of her marriage to the former jockey, Richard Pitman, but it was Corbiere who brought her to national attention by winning the Grand National in 1993. Yesterday, she wore a brooch of a horse in Corbiere colours.

Having become the f[illegible] woman to train the winner of the National, she did it again in 1995 with Royal Athlete. By then, she had also been responsible for Esha Ness's "victory" in the void race of 1993.

PITMAN'S PROGRESS

Born: June 11, 1946. First trainer's licence: 1975. Awarded OBE: 1998

BIG RACES WON

Grand National: Corbiere, 1983; Royal Athlete, 1995.
Cheltenham Gold Cup: Burrough Hill Lad, 1984; Garrison Savannah, 1991.
King George VI Chase: Burrough Hill Lad, 1984.
Scottish Grand National: Willsford, 1995.
Welsh National: Corbiere, 1982; Burrough Hill Lad, 1983; Stearsby, 1986.
Irish Grand National: Mudahim, 1997.

Burrough Hill Lad, the dark, dominant steeplechaser of 1984, won her the Gold Cup for the first time but one sensed, yesterday, that her greatest moment came in watching Mark partner Garrison Savannah to win the race in 1991. "That was very special," she said feelingly. "But I've got so many memories that money can't buy. I haven't got a lot of money but I feel I'm one of the richest people here." She would like one more memory, a valedictory winner at the greatest of all meetings, and how apt it would be if Ginger Fox, who runs in the last race tomorrow, could oblige.

Simon Barnes, page 1

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD

No 1667

ACROSS
1 In words (6)
4 Be injured: draw fluid from (5)
8 In good condition; sea inlet (5)
9 Antarctic bird (7)
10 A soft roll (7)
11 Flout (authority) (4)
12 Condensation (3)
14 Bring to bear (5)
15 Made eyes at (5)
18 The feeling of self (3)
20 Risky (bond); poor-quality (food) (4)
22 Tries to date (4,3)
24 Bohuslav —, Cz. composer (7)
25 Die by water (5)
26 Fashion; title (5)
27 Spiral round (6)

DOWN
1 In sight (7)
2 Regular habits (7)
3 Resign throne (8)
4 Gang; sounds like *forbidden* (4)
5 Escape notice of (5)
6 Drab, dirty (5)
7 Rate of progress (5)
13 Ordinary, for normal use (8)
16 Three Beethoven overtures (7)
17 Lessening of (political) tension (7)
19 Fibre from old rope (5)
20 Writer Henry, outlaw Jesse (5)
21 Anxious (5)
23 Quote, refer to (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1666
ACROSS: 1 Plagiarism 8 Tenniel 9 In all 10 Hook 11 Attorney 13 Uncle 14 Fitly 16 Chestnut 17 Bier 20 Swear 21 Gouging 22 Ascendancy
DOWN: 1 Pitch 2 Anne of Cleves 3 Iris 4 Relate 5 Spin-offs 6 Malnutrition 7 Clayey 12 Leotards 13 Upcast 15 Budgie 18 Rugby 19 Fund

Ferguson's taunts provoke angry riposte from Inter

FROM MATT DICKINSON IN MILAN

IF IT was a reaction that Alex Ferguson was after, Internazionale took the bait yesterday. Increasingly riled by the Manchester United manager's incessant references to their *habitual skulduggery*, the Italians responded with a few acerbic words of their own.

Quite why Ferguson, whose team lead 2-0 from the first leg, should have wanted to stir such hostility in the build-up to the European Cup quarter-final tonight, is not immediately apparent. Perhaps he calculates that Inter have more to lose from an ill-tempered game? Maybe he thinks his team will respond best by walking into a whirlwind? Whatever the reasoning, one *hopes that he has read the* situation correctly because he has turned his team, and particularly himself, into headline villains in Milan.

Mircea Lucescu, the Inter coach, believes that Ferguson risked trouble among supporters by his comments before the first tie, and the Romanian's highly-public retort yesterday ensured that the eardrums will be close to bursting as 80,000 supporters — at least 4,000 of them from Manchester — cram into the San Siro tonight.

"I always believed in the English sense of fair play," Lucescu said, "but then Alex Ferguson is from Scotland. And they don't have fair play there apparently. I have a great admiration for him as a coach, so I am very sad that *someone like him should* make these comments and that a club of Manchester United's stature should be involved in this way. I always thought United had a certain style.

"Before the game in England, some of the messages might have incited problems in the crowd. It is a sad thing and a bad thing, but maybe Ferguson has done it because he is afraid. That is what you have to ask yourself. Surely there can be no other explanation."

Amid the hurling of unpleasantries, there was a serious point to be made. Roy Keane, Paul Scholes and Denis Irwin were all cautioned in the first game, and a repeat would mean suspension from the first leg of the semi-final. Given that Gilles Veissiere, the French referee, showed no hesitation in dismissing Steve McManaman and Paul Ince when *Liverpool played* Valencia in the Uefa Cup this season, discipline will be surrendered at a cost.

"I think we have a good referee tomorrow," Ferguson said. "I hope so. If that is the case, we can see a very good match, a fair match. Then everyone is pleased."

Pressed on his criticism of Inter by an Italian journalist, his response was pointed: "You will get a fair game from Manchester United."

With Beckham and Baggio, Giggs and Ronaldo, Keane and Simeone on the same pitch, the hope must be that this game, like the first at Old Trafford, is remembered for the number of chances rather than bookings. With Inter needing to score at least twice, the onus is on the Italians to attack. United, meanwhile, know no other way.

The principal change from the first leg is, of course, the appearance of Ronaldo, who has scored one goal in five European Cup games this season compared with Dwight Yorke's seven in seven, and who remains preoccupied by health concerns and a lack of match fitness.

That did not stop Giuseppe Bergomi, the Inter captain, claiming yesterday that "emotionally his presence means so much to us", but Jaap Stam, Henning Berg and Ronny Johnsen have already faced the world's best striker at international level and none *appears traumatised by the* experience.

United have lost all six previous matches in Italy, scoring only once in the process, but Ferguson *stuck to his* prediction yesterday that his team would add to that solitary Norman Whiteside strike. Inter would then require four goals *to go through*, a task that would stretch even a fit Ronaldo. And the Brazilian is definitely not that.



INTER MILAN v MANCHESTER UNITED



Lucescu: public retort

